

SOCCER

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IT'S ALL TO PLAY FOR...



Desperation shown between Power and Force players during last Sunday's one-all draw, while Joel Porter keeps Andre Gumprecht at bay.

By Daniel Kuziow

A tantalising final week of football awaits soccer fans with no fewer than three sides in the running to secure the second Grand Final spot after week nine of the Homeart Final Series.

Perth Glory's victory over the Olympic Sharks and the draw between the Parramatta Power and the Adelaide City Force have left the latter sides within three points of each other with a single game left to play.

That round of matches will decide who will meet the Glory on Grand Final day who continued on their final series assault with their seventh consecutive victory—their latest coming against arch rivals the Olympic Sharks by a single goal.

The result was settled with a solitary strike in the 10th minute thanks to a firmly struck Damian Mori free kick, that made it five victories from as many home starts for the Glory squad.

In a match billed as a Grand Final precursor, it was once again the Glory's individual game breakers that proved the difference in a game that failed to reach any great heights.

Olympic, who needed a win that would have virtually secured a Grand Final spot, looked a team on the edge throughout the match and although they had many shots at goal never really tested Glory keeper Jason Petkovic, who became just the second keeper in NSL history to record 100 NSL clean sheets.

The game settled in to the usual pattern of Olympic dominating possession and Glory

looking to counter-punch quickly and the decisive moment came as Mori fired in a low free kick that proved to be enough on the night.

Despite the Sharks forcing the issue from that time on, a combination of poor finishing and confident Glory defending handed the Minor Premiers their fifth loss in their nine game finals history.

On Sunday, the Parramatta Power and the Adelaide Force played out a one-all draw at Parramatta Stadium that left neither side any closer to capturing the prized second place position.

Scott Tunbridge gave the visitors a first half lead after easily turning his Power marker before firing a low shot past Daniel Vukovic.

But the Power came out in a spirited second half and equalised through Ahmad Elrich. After Damien Brown had raced down the left flank he fired in a teasing cross that Lupce Acevski only managed to parry beyond the back post, where Elrich controlled before rifling his shot into the roof of the net.

The first 20 minutes was very cautious from both sides with the only notable action coming in the 19th minute, when Adelaide's Goran Lozanovski saved a potential goal with a terrific lunging tackle that denied Wayne O'Sullivan on the edge of the area, as Elrich played the English midfielder through.

Midway through the first half, Vukovic was called on to pull off his first notable save as Force defender Iain Fyfe went on a mazy run from just inside the Power half. With the

Power defence backing off to the edge of the penalty area, Fyfe played a well-directed shot goalward that the young custodian managed to turn past the post for a corner, but just past the half-hour stage however, the Force grabbed the game's opener as Tunbridge beat Vukovic inside his right post with a neatly styled shot.

Right on the stroke of half time, successive corners saw Paul O'Grady crack a shot from the edge of the area, which Lupce Acevski was able to block. The rebound fell to John Buonavoglia and his half volley looked goalbound until it smacked Lozanovski in the face and the Power eventually won a free kick. From the free kick, Cardozo was narrowly wide with curling shot over the wall.

But on 58 minutes, the home side was on level terms following good work from Brown who sized up a cross that Elrich did well to bring under control and force home.

From there, the Power continued their attacking assault, but for all their pressure, the best chances were really only half chances and not one shot actually had to be saved by Acevski.

Finally Sydney's week of wild weather took its toll on the scheduled Northern Spirit versus Newcastle game, with the match postponed until a later date due to a flooded pitch.

So in what can only be described as the ideal scenario, the Sharks will host the fourth placed Power, while the Force will front up against the Spirit where only one team will be left standing.

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aussiesabroad

BY DANIEL KUZIOW

David Zdrilic has left Walsall after turning down a new deal at the Bescot Stadium.

The 29-year-old striker was offered a one-year deal with The Saddlers, but he has decided to reject their offer and look for a new club elsewhere.

Zdrilic failed to hold down a regular place in the Walsall side this season due to injuries and a lack of form.

The Australian midfielder had said on Tuesday that he would relish the opportunity of moving to St James' Park, yet he will put transfer talks aside until the Dutch season concludes at the end of May.

With just one year left on his Feyenoord contract, Emerton becomes a potentially attractive signing, given that the club from Rotterdam will not want to lose

Italian agent Andrea D'Amico said he met Spurs chairman Daniel Levy at White Hart Lane to discuss the Australian.

However, McKenzie claimed Viduka was not for sale and no-one had expressed an interest in him.

"We've had no approach for Mark Viduka from Spurs or any other club," McKenzie told the club's website.

"I am surprised to hear the claims of talks between an agent and Spurs because if this is true it would clearly constitute an illegal approach.

"Anyway, our position is that Mark Viduka is not for sale."

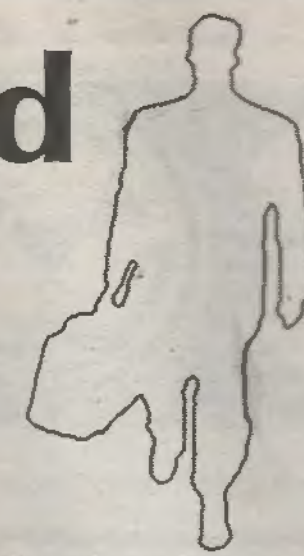
D'Amico's version of the situation is different, claiming a host of clubs were chasing Viduka.

"At the moment it is only interest from Spurs, and there are a lot of clubs in Europe, who are interested in Mark," he said.

The 27-year-old cost Leeds £6million from Celtic in July 2000 but D'Amico reckoned Spurs boss Glenn Hoddle, who is under huge pressure to bring a big name to the club, would not have to pay that much.

He said: "I think the transfer figure would be cheaper than before."

Viduka still has three years to run on his current contract.



Dearden."I could have gone ahead and sold Danny without consulting anyone, but that is not the way I wanted to do things."

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On a sad note, Sheffield United will be without defender Shaun Murphy for the duration of the First Division play-offs after revealing that his wife, Alison, has been fighting breast cancer for the past two years and that tests have found a fresh tumour.

"At times like this your priorities have to be at home. There are more important things in life than football and I have to spend time with Alison," 32-year old Murphy told the Yorkshire Post.

"Obviously, I hope the club win promotion and my best wishes go to the other lads. I wouldn't want my absence to upset things in any way."

Our thoughts and prayers are with Shaun and his wife as they face this difficult time.

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New Hull City signing Danny Allsopp is at the centre of a storm over the ownership of former club, Notts County.

Allsopp quit the Magpies for Peter Taylor's Hull last week, but leaders of a consortium looking to takeover Notts County claim they weren't consulted about the Australian's potential sale.

The club's administrator Paul Finitty has rejected the claims and told the Nottingham Evening Post: "It had been an open secret for a few months that Danny had wanted to leave Notts."

"A lot of people at the club were aware of the situation. But, when it came to talks with Hull, the potential new owners were consulted, as was manager Billy



Danny Allsopp: Is the centre of a feud at his former club Notts County.

Walsall boss Colin Lee is confident of securing Aussie midfielder Steve Corica to a new contract. The former Leicester City and Wolves star struggled to maintain a starting place in Lee's line-up towards the end of the season, but remains a priority signing for the Saddlers. Corica has to decide by the end of May whether to accept the offer of a new one-year deal. "Steve had an indifferent season," Lee told the Express and Star.

"But he is a talented lad. Steve has a few more days to decide and it looks favourable that he will come back."

□□□□

West Australian Stan Lazaridis was one of six players honoured at Birmingham City's end of season awards dinner which was attended by over 1,000 players, board members, management and fans at the Hilton Birmingham Metropole Hotel late last week.

The 30-year-old Australian international's contributions were recognised by team manager Steve Bruce who announced Lazaridis as the Clubman of the Year for season 2002/03. Lazaridis made 33 appearances, and scored two goals, to help Birmingham avoid relegation in their debut Premier League campaign.



Brett Emerton: Will not let transfer talk distract him as Feyenoord gun for second place.

TOP AUSSIES ABROAD SCORERS

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Brett HOLMAN	
Excelsior	6
John MAISANO	
Greenock Morton	6

Postecoglou ready for challenge

By Peter Damalas

The second half of this year promises to be a very busy period for national youth team coach, Ange Postecoglou.

With the Under 20s World Youth Championships re-scheduled for November and December in the United Arab Emirates due to the conflict in the Middle East, and the Under 17s tournament coming up in August, the national coaching structure will be stretched to its maximum capacity.

Considering that the Under 20s championship was originally scheduled for March-April and will now be played after the Under 17s, there has been a change in the immediate priorities for Postecoglou. "I'll be leaving the Under 20s on the backburner for a little while. We'll be going into camp in about September and October, and I'll take another look at the guys then." The uncertainty in the Middle East, which forced FIFA into the decision to postpone the tournament, has caused a number of selection dilemmas for each participating country. FIFA decided to hold the tournament off until the end of the year to give the players currently under the age bracket the opportunity to play in the event.

But with just over two months between the Final of the Under 17s and the opening fixture of the Under 20s, Postecoglou will have a short time to prepare. "It will be hard playing at the end of the year. We were

obviously concerned about the situation in the Middle East, as were FIFA. We were largely guided by them, and they have a good understanding of how to organise and re-schedule an event, with tight security.

"There won't be too many changes to our set up. We had originally planned to meet in Perth, where the climate is similar to the United Arab Emirates. But the weather over there doesn't really change, and it is hot all year round. I suppose the good thing is that the NSL will be running at that time,

so there is no real concerns about the players fitness levels" Postecoglou said. The two time NSL championship winner raised a few eyebrows in his original selection, which included four players who will be eligible for the next Under 20s event in 2005. Home based players, Jobe Wheelhouse and Vince Lia, together with Jay Lucas of Southampton and Spase Dilevski of PSV Eindhoven, were fast tracked into the squad. Postecoglou maintains that other eligible players that have missed out will have

another opportunity to impress.

"We will be starting everything from scratch basically. Everyone will get a chance to stake a claim in the squad. I have to take into consideration any injuries and who is playing well" he said.

The competition for places up front is particularly intense. The tremendous depth in this part of the field is highlighted by the omission of Olympic Sharks striker Franco Parisi. Team captain Scott McDonald, Alex Brosque (candidate for the Under 21 NSL Player of the Year), Michael Baird and Jay Lucas will be vying for two positions in the formation used by Postecoglou. Inter Milan's Carl Valeri is likely to play in a deep lying role behind the front two. Despite stating that the door is open for those players that missed out on original selection, the issue with Brett Holman, according to the coach, has concluded. "As far as Holman is concerned, the case is closed" he said.

Postecoglou has not altered his policy relating to players availability. Holman, formerly of Parramatta Power and now on loan at Excelsior in the Netherlands, declared himself unavailable for the World Youth qualifiers, and will now miss the tournament proper.

The Young Socceroos have a tough draw, and will play the Czech Republic, Canada and Brazil in the First Round. Despite the prestige of this event, considering the superstars that may emerge from it, the Under

17s tournament is the first item on the agenda.

This event also requires a great deal of preparation, considering the climate change from Australia to Finland. An eighteen man squad will travel to the host nation in early June for two friendly matches which will be used as an important selection tool, while it will also give the players an opportunity to acclimatise to the conditions.

"It is hard to say how we will go in these finals. We have not played a lot of games, and it has been difficult with the funding problems at Soccer Australia. For most of these players, the qualifiers have been their only exposure to international competition" the coach said.

Wollongong Wolves defender, Jacob Timpano, who made an impressive National Soccer League debut this season, has been earmarked by Postecoglou as the likely captain of the team.

The timing of these two FIFA championships will also play a part in the success of the Young Socceroos and Joeys.

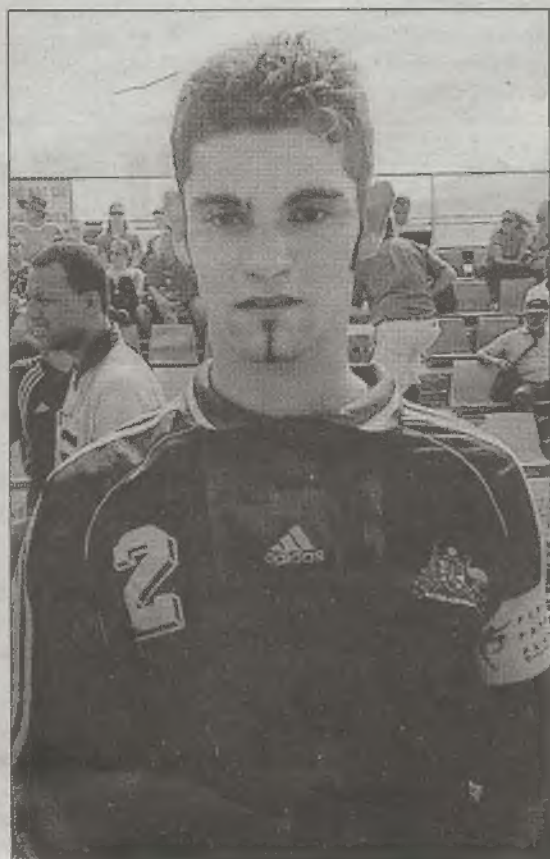
"A lot depends on the players, and whether they are playing regular football at the time. It is important for both sets of players that they are playing at a competitive level when these tournaments begin" Postecoglou said. World Youth Championships have traditionally been used by young players as a springboard to

success in Europe. History has shown that a positive showing in these matches has often led to overseas transfers, with many scouts in attendance to find new talent.

Postecoglou commented on the growing trend for Australian players to trial overseas at a younger age. "Each case is individual, but these boys need to make sure they move to the right club and are playing regularly. I think that a seventeen year old will develop here in the national league rather than

being a reserve in Europe.

There are exceptions however, but I believe players will be better for their experience in Australia" he said. With qualifiers for the 2006 FIFA World Cup some time away, the players that feature this year are likely to be in the running for the Socceroos outfit. In a year in which World Cup hype has vanished, the Joeys and Young Socceroos will ensure Australian supporters have something to look forward to.



Jacob Timpano: Young Wolves star looks set to lead the new U17 Joeys side at the U17 World Cup in Finland.



Carl Valeri: Current Inter Milan youth star will play a pivotal role in Ange's U20 squad this year.

New date set for SA meeting

The Soccer Australia Board has confirmed that a rescheduled General Meeting will be held on Saturday 7th June.

The board has released a statement saying after considerable consultation with legal personnel as well as the Australian Sports Commission, the new date has been set in consideration of the 'ability of the stakeholders of Soccer Australia to democratically consider and determine the appropriate action towards the reform of soccer.'

The meeting was originally scheduled for June 21, but was moved forward after it was discovered that prospective board chairman Frank Lowy would be overseas.

The initial General Meeting, held earlier this month, was abandoned after it was realised that the prospective board,

known as the 'Lowy team', was unlikely to be elected.

The current board also took the opportunity in its statement to take a swipe at critics of its approach of the reform process outlined in the Crawford Report.

"In spite of some reports in the media portraying the Board as confrontational and 'anti-reform', this Board has again attended to and delivered what it said it would - namely to establish the forum whereby the stakeholders of Soccer Australia can consider the recommendations of the Crawford Report and self determine the future path of the game in accordance with the Corporations Act, the FIFA Statutes and its own Articles of Association.

The Board has now attended to this in the shortest possible time, "Acting Chairman of Soccer Australia Les Avery said in the statement.



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NSL MATCH POSTPONED

Sydney's inclement weather forced the postponement of last Friday night's NSL championship match between Northern Spirit and Newcastle United.

The match that was scheduled to start at 7:30 at North Sydney Oval, will be rescheduled after heavy rain flooded the pitch.

Both sides agreed that the large amount of surface water meant that even if the weather

improved, the pitch would be unplayable.

"Taking into consideration player safety and the forecast of further inclement weather conditions for the rest of the day, the decision was made to postpone last Friday's fixture," a statement from the NSL said.

The match was to be the team's penultimate of the ten-week championship series, with neither team in a position to make the final.

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Socceroos' Dublin Date Confirmed



V Bomber Mark Viduka should be in action against the Irish in August.

SOCCER Australia last week announced that they have confirmed an international match for the Socceroos with the Republic of Ireland in Dublin on Wednesday, August 20.

The Socceroos will be in action for the first time since their historic international win over England in February, while the Republic of Ireland, who are currently ranked 15th in the FIFA World Rankings, have scheduled this match as preparation for their final qualification games for the 2004 European Championships — against Russia on September 6 and Switzerland on October 11.

Australia have not previously faced the Republic of Ireland at senior international level. In the only international match between the two countries, a Damien Duff-led Irish thrashed the Young Socceroos 4-0 in 1999 FIFA World Youth Championships.

It will be interesting to see whether Manchester United skipper Roy Keane will again make his international presence felt after rumours have filtered through the grape-vine that he could don the green jersey once more.

The Socceroos should have a close to strength squad for this fixture and will be looking towards playing at its best proving to people that their three-one victory over England was no fluke.



Former Socceroo keeper Mark Bosnich will towards the U.S for a possible career change away from football.

Despite being linked with at least two English Premier League clubs, banned Aussie goalkeeper Mark Bosnich has said he will quit football in favour of a career change in the United States.

During a night out on the drink, the 31-year-old former Manchester United and Chelsea No.1 reportedly told a Sunday Mirror reporter that he was fed up with the game following his nine-month suspension for a positive cocaine test last October.

US or bust for Bosnich

"I don't really give a toss about football anymore. Football," Bosnich was quoted as saying.

"It would take me a year to 18 months to get back into the form I was. And I really can't be bothered.

"I have had enough. I want to try and make it as a sports star in America.

"I don't know what type of sport I would do. But that is what I want to do."

Bosnich will be eligible to return to action in September, with Portsmouth and Manchester City touted as the leading candidates should he wish to return to the top flight.

However, his latest comments seem to suggest he is not interested in a comeback while his girlfriend, English model Sophie Anderton, has claimed that Bosnich is spiralling out of control.

"He's drinking too much. He's gambling too much. Hell, he owes me loads of money. What's a girl to do?" Anderton reportedly told the paper.

Mori, Rech Head Nominees

Perth Glory striker Damian Mori and Brisbane Strikers' Fernando Rech have been nominated for the second season in succession for the Warren Medal as National Soccer League's Players' Player of the Year.

Mori, the league's top goalscorer and last season's award winner Brazilian ace Rech, are in the running to be honoured for the second time.

Rech recently parted company with club the Brisbane Strikers after a five-year stay at the club to return to his homeland in Brazil to continue his footballing career.

Newcastle United striker Joel Griffiths, 23, is the youngest nominee among the five while Olympic Sharks duo Ante Milicic and Tom Pondeljak complete the 2002/03 list.

The Papasavas Medal for Under 21 Player of the Year will be fought out between Perth Glory's Olyroos defender David Tarka and strikers Alex Brosque of Marconi Stallions and Franco Parisi of Olympic Sharks.

Newcastle United custodian Daniel Beltrame has been nominated as Goalkeeper of the Year along with Olympic Sharks' Clint Bolton and two-time winner Jason Petkovic of Perth Glory.

The Coach of the Year voting does not close until Tuesday, May 27.

Newcastle United may be out of the running for a Grand Final place but it has already won the Fair Play Award.

In the National Youth League competitions, Matthew Anstey of the AIS, John Majurovski of Wollongong Wolves and Newcastle United's Peter McPherson are in contention as Northern Division Player of the Year while the award for the Southern Division will go to either

Admir Dedovic of Melbourne Knights Youth, Marino Gasparis of Bulleen Zebras or Bill Natsioulas of Melbourne Knights Academy.

The NSL Awards winners and date of presentation will be announced at a later date.

Meanwhile, the nominees for the Women's National Soccer League Player of the Season Award — Julie Dolan Medal — are Adelaide Sensation's Lisa de Vanna, Queensland Sting's Heather Garriock and Canberra Eclipse's Tal Karp.



Damian Mori and Tom Pondeljak are both vying for this season's NSL Player of the Year.



Alex Brosque: Young Stallions youngster is one of the favourites to take out the U21's Player of the Year.



Big Daniel Beltrame has been nominated as this season's possible goalkeeper of the year.



Harry Kewell: Leeds United star will have his options open for a possible transfer next season?

Former Australian coach Terry Venables says Socceroo Harry Kewell should leave Leeds United.

Speaking before the final game of the English Premier League season, in which Leeds beat Aston Villa 3-1 at Elland Road, Venables told The News of the World the time has come for his former charge to move on.

"In the short term, keeping Harry another year might help," Venables said. "But it is a false optimism

El Tels Kewell to go

if the upshot is to have to sell other players to cover the fall in expected transfer revenue and then wave him goodbye without getting a penny in 12 months' time."

"For Harry's sake, I also hope that doesn't happen. He is too good a player to tread water for a season waiting for a big move. A footballer's life is too short to waste one of your peak years - and Kewell is 25 in September."

"I cannot think of a team in England or Europe that would not be improved by his arrival. Harry is the perfect footballer. He has the attitude and ability to make it count."

"If I were manager of a club with ambition, I would go for him tomorrow. And if Harry wants to leave, he owes it to himself to go sooner rather than later. He has a winner's attitude - and he should be with a winning team."

D'AVRAY SALUTES GLORY BOYS

Perth Glory coach Mich d'Avray has saluted his players for a fantastic achievement in securing a second consecutive home Grand Final.

Glory's home Grand Final aim was achieved without them kicking a ball, Newcastle's win against Olympic Sharks ensuring Glory cannot be caught in the Homeart Championship Series.

"This is a fantastic achievement and the players deserve all the praise," said d'Avray.

"Their efforts in the finals series have been almost superhuman, we have scored 26 goals and overcome a three point deficit to climb above Olympic.

"It has been an incredible effort by the whole squad and the spirit has been tremendous.

"Now we will focus all our attention on the Grand Final and hope we can go one step further than we did last season."

The Glory will look towards ending their hoodoo of failing to win a Grand-Final in the last two seasons by hopefully taking out this year's Finals.

The Perth boys will look towards man of the moment Bobby Despotovski who has been in fine striking form of late grabbing a number of goals in his pursuit of being the top marksman of the NSL Finals series.



Perth Glory coach Mich d'Avray has hailed his players for reaching yet another Grand-Final.

Stange wants Iraq to play Australia

Iraq coach Bernd Stange is hopeful of organizing an international friendly with Australia for later this year.

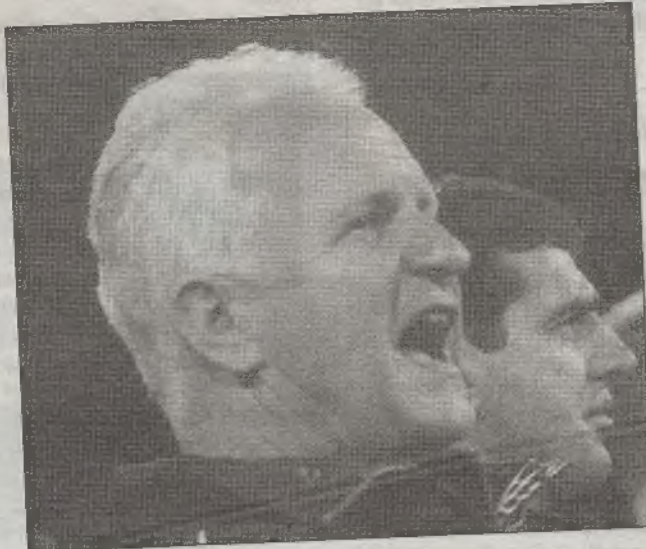
The charismatic German enjoyed a successful spell as coach with Australia's biggest club, Perth Glory, and is keen to see his team play Frank Farina's Socceroos.

Stange is working closely with the Iraqi FA's new president Hussain Saeed and told the Sun-Herald, "I have been asked by Saeed, who is a legend in Asian soccer, to start planning for the future."

"What I will do is call Frank Farina, maybe to have a friendly game in Australia with the Iraqi national team."

"There are still problems between Iraq and the United States, England and Australia but it is my idea to bring the Iraqi players to the world and to show them they have big support."

"Of course, we need financial support, we need tickets and free accommodation, because there is



Iraqi coach and former Glory mentor Bernd Stange.

no money," he added.

"There is no equipment, there are no balls, everything is stolen. The national stadium is destroyed, the changing rooms and the stores of the Olympic committee are burned, there is nothing."

Australia coach Frank Farina

said the proposal would be seriously considered.

"There's a lot of things to consider, such as the political situation," he said. "But if the proposal came through we would definitely look into it."

West Adelaide seeks NSL return

West Adelaide are seeking a return to the National League, says Adelaide Olympic secretary Andrew Haralampopoulos.

Haralampopoulos told the Sunday Mail: "We have put an application into Soccer Australia."

"And the South Australian Soccer Federation has had a copy of the application since February for another broad-based team in Adelaide."

"The new club will work in partnership with the 24 other clubs in Adelaide."

"Once we're given the green light by Soccer Australia, we'll have to look at the structure of the club and appoint a fresh board."

West Adelaide already has been guaranteed major sponsorship and will be aiming to make their home base at Hindmarsh Stadium, Haralampopoulos said.

"We have a \$400,000 major sponsorship pledge and our home base will be Hindmarsh Stadium," he said.

"Even though we're developing

our own facility and we're going to get that to a fantastic standard but anyone who doesn't play at Hindmarsh in the NSL league is bloody stupid."

"Adelaide City is aware of the application and they fully support it."

He added, "The argument is that all the people who have been disenchanted when the Adelaide Sharks went through and we'll try to get them back into the game."

"There are so many people who want West Adelaide back in the NSL."



GLORY STARS TO LEAVE

Perth Glory will lose defenders Jamie Harnwell and Shane Pryce at the end of the season.

Both players will leave club when their contract ends, with Pryce heading to Singapore and Harnwell to England. Pryce will take up a lucrative offer from Trevor Morgan's Sengkang Marine and told the West Australian, "It's going to be an experience of a lifetime."

I've only ever played in Australia and I think I'm going to learn a lot, not only soccer-wise but within

myself because of the cultural differences. "The club has really looked after me."

At the moment I'm just looking for something to reignite my soccer career."

Harnwell will be travelling to England determined to win a contract. "Every time I've been overseas I've always had the luxury of coming back to something, whether it be Uni or a contract with Glory."

This time I'll be going over with everything to prove and everything on the line," he said.



Jamie Harnwell

D-DAY FOR SOUTHS

Victorian National League side South Melbourne is expected to announce their new coach for season 2003/04 today with strong reports that its developed into a three-horse race between Leon Gardikiotis, Stuart Munro and Branko Culina.

It was reported last week that former South coach Mickey Peterson was not considered for the job leaving it wide-open for the three



Who will South's new coach be? From (L-R) Leon Gardikiotis - Stuart Munro or Branko Culina?

gentleman mentioned above.

Former Carlton boss Stuart Munro and ex-Sydney United coach Branko Culina have emerged as strong favourites to take out the new coaching role that had attracted a number of 'would-be' candidates.

However, word from Bob Jane Stadium has former Canberra Cosmos coach Gardikiotis as a good chance of filling the clubs top position as head-coach.

Being one of the very few coaches that possess an international coaching license, it is this trait that differentiates him from the rest.

Many soccer followers were stunned to see Culina gain a last minute interview by the club, but it was no surprise that the former Olympic Sharks mentor was after a job in this years National League.

South Melbourne fans were disappointed last year at the side's performance and the failure to make the finals series all but summed a dreadful year for the Blues.

Success is seen as a must for next year by many devoted South fans who hope that the Glory days will begin to flourish at Bob Jane Stadium once again.

Home drought for Socceroos fans



Socceroo coach Frank Farina.

The Socceroos will stay in mothballs until late August after Soccer Australia officially gave up hope of holding any friendly matches in Australia this year.

The Socceroos' next game will be against Republic of Ireland on August 20 in Dublin, with the match announced 10 days ago locked in after written contracts were exchanged.

But Australian fans, who last saw the Socceroos on home soil in the World Cup qualifier in November 2001, are unlikely to see a full-strength Socceroos side playing in Australia for at least another 12 months.

Any matches in Australia would have to be scheduled during the European off-season from mid-May to July - and it won't happen this year.

A proposed two-match series against Uruguay in June fell by the wayside after promoters withdrew

their tenders and no other matches will be scheduled to replace them.

It follows the farcical on-again, off-again April Fool's Day friendly against Argentina which fell through and a match against Nigeria in London in August, which also collapsed.

Socceroos coach Frank Farina made light of the fact his first-choice side will have played only one match in 21 months by the time the Ireland clash comes around.

"I don't think it's too harmful," Farina said.

"If it was to continue in this manner, it would have been very harmful leading up to the 2006 World Cup finals."

"I think we're on track at the moment. I'm very optimistic about what lies ahead for us."

Australia has not played since its 3-1 victory over England in London in February despite confident predictions from Soccer Australia officials at the time that the result would kick-start the Socceroos' stagnant interna-

tional program.

Australia will play Republic of Ireland at Lansdowne Road - the first time the two countries have met at senior level.

The Irish made the round of 16 at last year's World Cup finals and boast a line-up including English Premier League stars Robbie Keane of Spurs, Blackburn's Damien Duff and Leeds' Ian Harte.

Farina said he expected the Irish to be at least the equal of England and that he would consider injecting youth into the Socceroos team chosen for the match.

"I'm hoping to have a lot of headaches in selecting the side," Farina said.

"We'll be looking to bring younger players in most definitely."

The Socceroos start their Oceania World Cup qualifiers in September 2004, with the winner of the six-team group earning direct qualification to the 2006 World Cup finals in Germany.

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THE SUBURBAN GROUND

By Joe Russo

With all the talk in soccer currently surrounding reform of the code and the possibility of a new Australian Premier League, we may well be looking to Rugby League to learn a valuable lesson.

In the mid 1990's League was torn apart with Super League and the healing process involved the rationalisation (merging) of teams which was a dismal failure.



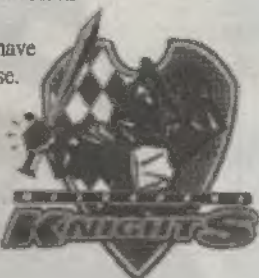
Teams merged and the old suburban League grounds of Sydney were abandoned. Leichhardt Oval, Kogarah Jubilee Oval, Brookvale Oval, North Sydney Oval, Belmore Sports Ground, Redfern Oval and Lidcombe Oval were either completely abandoned or their usage severely reduced.

It was all in the name of progress with mass marketing of the code and pay television the priority. However, someone forgot to ask the fans if they were dissatisfied with their local suburban ground. Rugby League had lost its traditional supporters and it suffered.

Now Brookvale, Leichhardt and Kogarah have been given a spit and polish and are back in use. There are rumours in League that Redfern and Belmore will also come out of moth-balls in the next few years.

Soccer could well and truly learn from the errors of League. In the current atmosphere of reform it is to be hoped that the local ground is not abandoned.

A few years ago there was some pressure on the Melbourne Knights to leave their base in Somers Street but to their cred-



it they stuck to their traditional venue. While the Knights are in the NSL why should they play anywhere else?

Parramatta Power in its four year history has failed dismally to attract a crowd at Parramatta Stadium. The venue is lovely but it is far too big for soccer at the moment.

Parking is always a problem there and it is only suitable really for perhaps a Grand Final or a Socceroo match against one of the Pacific Island countries.

Soccer could well and truly learn from the errors of League. In the current atmosphere of reform it is to be hoped that the local ground is not abandoned.

Parramatta Power, dare it be suggested, would be better off playing some of their matches at traditional soccer grounds in Sydney such as Melita Stadium in Granville and Gabbie Stadium in Blacktown.

Neither of these venues are terribly flash but they are adequate. Furthermore, a crowd of a few thousand at either venue would create a really pleasant atmosphere while at Parramatta Stadium they seem to get lost.

Soccer should already have learnt about Parramatta Stadium because in David Hill's time as Soccer Australia President he forced Sydney United to transfer there. However, the club returned to Edensor Park a year later.

Sydney Olympic changed their name to Olympic Sharks to enhance their move to Toyota Park in Cronulla. It was with great intentions that they moved because they were aiming to expand their supporter base and take advantage of the huge soccer following in the Sutherland Shire.

Two years into a three-year contract to play at the Cronulla Sharks

Rugby League ground, it is clear that the people of the Sutherland Shire have not taken to Olympic, a club traditionally supported by Sydney's Greek community.

Olympic have never really had a home ground but their more successful ones were St George Stadium, Leichhardt Oval and Belmore Sports Ground.

It would be best for all concerned if they returned to Belmore or, at worst, they could share the new Kogarah with the St George Dragons League team. Kogarah is an area which is far more central to their traditional supporter base. With the Australian Premier League a real possibility in the next few years it is to be hoped that the grass roots of soccer are not forgotten. No one wants to watch soccer at Parramatta Stadium, Aussie Stadium or Homebush's Olympic Stadium where the players are too far away from the spectators. The fans enjoy standing or sitting on a hill in a characteristic suburban ground.



They enjoy sitting in the suburban grandstand where everyone is equal and those corporate types are left to concentrate on Rugby Union. They enjoy travelling by car a short distance even though parking may be several streets away. They enjoy paying a reasonable admission fee knowing that it is not severely inflated to cover the ground hiring fees.

They enjoy seeing the players a few metres away. And, finally, they have always supported soccer, still do and will continue to do so, providing they are not frightened away by the white elephant stadiums.



IAN CROOK: 'Against All Odds'



Newcastle United coach has achieved a remarkable result this year by leading his young chargers towards the NSL Final Series.

By Damian Hall

Newcastle United manager Ian 'Chippy' Crook has created soccer history in New South Wales, but he's also part of football folklore in a far eastern corner of England.

During his eleven-year spell at Norwich City, he played in club's finest hour as they beat Bayern Munich in the Olympic Stadium.

The underrated midfielder also played for Tottenham and earned an England B cap. After a brief spell in Japan, Crook arrived in Sydney in 1998, turning out for Northern Spirit.

On retirement he coached the Spirit youth team with enough success to earn him a post at Newcastle in May 2001. Here he speaks to Damian Hall...

You won Coach of the Year 2002 in your first full season, that wasn't a bad start to NSL management was it?

"Yeah, it was a great way to start off. But that was all down to the players really. They're the ones who can win and lose games for you. I've got a good bunch

of lads here at Newcastle. They put all the hard work in."

That's very modest...

"Well, you can get a group of players that don't want to play for you, who won't work hard and who can lose you games if they don't like you. Players can make you look good or bad, or foolish."

The Championship play-off series hasn't gone so well for you this year. Why is that?

"For the game against Adelaide I had 12 players out because of injuries and for most games I've had eight or nine players unavailable. Take eight or nine players out of any team, even Manchester United, and you're going to struggle. Since the play-offs started I've given six players first team debuts."

You've let in a few late goals too. Is that related to the inexperienced nature of the teams you've had to field?

"I think so, yes. The younger players bring a lot of enthusiasm and desire to the team. But when the game is getting difficult and demands high level of concentration, players focus can lapse and mistakes happen. That's from inexperience."

You came out of retirement a few years ago, were you ever tempted to put your boots on again?

"Ha ha. There's a simple answer for that one. No way. I'm 40 now - my playing days are well over."

How different is 'soccer' in Australia to 'football' in the UK?

"It's a long way away in miles and a long way away regarding the whole set-up. I mean Newcastle is a professional club and the players are full time footballers, but it's worlds apart really. We can't afford to have full time staff across the board; physios, masseurs, coaches. But that said, Australia has given me a great grounding in the game. I've learnt a hell of a lot in a short space of time, both good and bad. And I've really enjoyed it here."

There are some British players down here, Ian Ferguson, Julian Watts, is this a good place for foreign players to come to?

"The more good players we get down here the better it will be for the game. And it can be good for the

players too. It's a better standard here than in say the Premiership reserve league. For example, Ben Burgess came down here a few years ago, from Blackburn's reserves, did really well for Northern Spirit and went back and scored lots of goals for Stockport and then Brentford (now at Hull City)."

Do you agree with the concept of a championship play-off series?

"Call me an old fashioned Englishman, but I don't."

The first team past the post should be champions. You might be the best team all season and then lose the title in a bad 90 minutes. With this year's format you can end up with dead games towards the end, where the outcome doesn't really matter. And that affects the crowds too. That said, there has been some good quality football this year."

What can be done to improve soccer in Australia?

"That's the big question isn't it - I haven't got the answer. Essentially, it's all about the product being good enough. And it needs television exposure so that people can find out about it. People down here don't know what's going on. We've had great crowds at Newcastle though; 19,000 for a match last season and crowds of 10,000, 11,000 and 12,000 for some games this year. That's been fantastic."

Do you agree with FIFA awarding direct World Cup entry for the Oceania region? And how good are the Socceroos really?

"It depends what the World Cup is meant to be about. If it's about the best 32 teams in the world competing against each other then it was probably wrong. But if it's about promoting the

game world wide - and I think it is - then it was the right thing to do. Harry Kewell would get in the England side, Mark Viduka, Craig Moore and Mark Schwarzer would all be close. They've beaten England, France and Brazil.

If the Socceroos get to the next World Cup finals, then I think they'll definitely surprise some people. And once they've cut their teeth on one World Cup, they can only get stronger."



'Never scared to back out of a challenge', Crookie shown in full verbal action during his playing days with Norwich City.

Emerton wants Toon move



Brett Emerton could make the switch to St James' Park next season?

Brett Emerton would love to join Newcastle, but the Australian midfielder has revealed he has yet to be approached by the Tyneside club.

The 24-year-old Australian international is reportedly being lined up by Magpies boss Sir Bobby Robson, who tried to sign the right-sided midfielder in August.

Feyenoord rejected Newcastle's offer of £8million then, but in the current financial climate it is believed the Barclaycard Premiership club could get their man for around £5million.

Emerton, who played in the Feyenoord side which beat Newcastle 1-0 at St James' Park in the Champions League this season, admitted he would welcome a Newcastle bid should one be forthcoming.

He said: "I haven't heard anything other than what has been said before, that the club [Newcastle] have shown an interest in me.

"If that's true then that's good news. Newcastle are a big club and I've made no secret of my desire to play in the English Premiership.

"But no talks have taken place at the moment. I'm still a Feyenoord player and I am completely committed to helping the club achieve all their goals this season.

"There are three games left [in the league] and we have a very important one on Sunday against PSV (Eindhoven) and I'm just focusing on that at the moment."

Emerton joined Feyenoord in the summer of 2000 and has established himself as one of the club's key players over the past three seasons, helping the Dutch giants win the UEFA Cup last May.

He has consistently been linked with a move to English shores for the last 12 months, with Newcastle, Leeds and Liverpool all being mentioned as potential suitors for the player last summer.

Although he prefers to operate in midfield, Emerton, who has scored three goals in 43 appearances this season, has frequently filled in a right-back and as a wing-back for Feyenoord during his time at De Kuip.

Emerton picked up this year's Oceania Player of the Year award as voted by various journalists and coaches from the Oceania region.

'Emo' polled in at 63 votes, beating the likes of Kewell, Viduka and Schwarzer for the coveted title.

The speedy midfielder gained massive plaudits from the European public and media during this year's Champions League after being inducted in nominations for picking the best Champions League side.

REDDY SET TO QUIT POWER



Liam Reddy: Talented Power keeper has fallen out of favour with coach Nick Theo.

Troubled Parramatta goalkeeper Liam Reddy looks to have played his last match for the NSL club after he was dumped from the Power squad because of disciplinary reasons.

Reddy, who was on shaky ground at the club after king hitting Olympic defender Mark Byrnes during a match in October last year, won't play again this season and will be looking for a new team because he's off contract.

While coach Nick Theodorakopoulos would not go into specifics about Reddy's axing it was understood his outspoken manner did not go down well at the club and he had become

increasingly unpopular with a number of players and officials.

"There's been a continuation of his disciplinary problems," Theodorakopoulos said to the media last week.

"The problem is not mine, it's his and he's definitely out for next week."

Theodorakopoulos said he would rip up Reddy's contract after the Byrnes incident but cooled on the idea after his initial outburst and talks with the club's board.

Reddy was then fined and suspended. The son of former St George rugby

league forward Rod Reddy, Liam is widely regarded as one of the most talented keepers in Australia but has a checkered disciplinary record.

Reddy had been sent off in an NSL match prior to the punching incident and had also been dismissed in various friendly and youth team games in the past three years.

He also had disciplinary problems during his stint at the Australian Institute of Sport.

The talented 21-year-old is hoping to figure prominently in Frank Farina's plans for next year's Olympics after some starring displays for his side this year.

Even with this issue against Reddy, his ability as a keeper has clearly shown that he could still have that dream chance to one day don the Green and Gold jersey of Australia.

A number of soccer spectators however have noticed a change in Reddy's style after his red-card incident against the Sharks at the start of the season.

Liam has pulled through a number of great games that have shown that he has what it takes to compete with the competitions best here in Australia.

A number of players, especially the younger stars, would have put their heads down after that unfortunate incident but to Reddy's credit he's continued to plod along in fine form.

A possible switch to another club in the NSL or a move overseas could be the likely option for the former AIS star.

It is rumored that a current National League goalkeeper who is up for a Soccer Australia award this season is said to be on his way to

the Power next season casting more doubt that Reddy would be the side's number one.

Reddy's replacement has been second string keeper Danny Vukovic, a raw 18-year-old former NSW State representative keeper who has done well when called upon.

Also another keeper on the Power listing is yet another youngster by the name of Andrew Carman.

Final Tickets Go On Sale

Tickets for Perth Glory's second successive NSL Grand Final go on sale to Golden Members at 9am on Monday, May 26.

Golden Members will have from 9am to noon to secure their entitlement of four tickets in either budget, standard or premium seating areas.

Other supporters will be able to secure tickets as follows:

Season Ticket Holders: From noon to 5.30pm on May 26; four budget tickets per member.

Members (including Club Glory, Peters Squad and Strikers Club): From 9am to 5.30pm on Tuesday May 27; four budget tickets per member.

Official Supporters Club: noon to 3pm

Tuesday May 27; two budget tickets per member Glory Packs, Saturday Night miniplans: 3pm to 5.30pm Tuesday May 27; two budget tickets per member.

Any remaining tickets will go on sale to the general public from Wednesday May 28 at 9am.

Chief Executive Officer Jeff Dennis said the ticket system was the same one that had worked well last two seasons.

"Anyone with any level of Perth Glory membership is guaranteed tickets - and there should be some left over for casual supporters who want to be part of a fantastic day," said Mr Dennis.

Up to 2000 seats have been put aside for visiting supporters.



Spirit's Wilkinson to the J-League?

Northern Spirit defender Alex Wilkinson has been offered trials with Japanese outfit Kyoto Purple Sanga it was reported in the media last week.

The Australia U20 international is expected to be part of Ange Postecoglou's squad for this year's World Cup after establishing himself as a regular with Spirit this season.

Wilkinson is likely to take up the offer at the end of the finals campaign.

Alex will team up with yet another Australian star currently starring in the J-League in former Socceroo Ned Zelic.

The sterling defender has had a rather consistent year after the tall star was given his chance by coach Lawrie McKinna to strut his stuff in this year's National League.

Two players that have helped in the development of the youngster in becoming one of Australia's most exciting prospects has been Spirit team-mates Alex Tobin and former English star Julian Watts.

The pair known for their experience at top level have shown the former Gladesville Hornsby youth player a trick or two about the world game.

'Wilko' was vice captain in the U17 Joeys



Alex Wilkinson: The strapping stopper has been linked to a possible move to the J-League with side Kyoto Purple Sanga.

side that took part in the side that went to Trinidad & Tobago.

Northern Spirit this season unearthed a number of quality young stars in Jonathon Richter, Bradley Groves, Matthew Osman, Omar Obeid and Mark Milligan.



OFF THE CROSSBAR

By Allan Crisp

HUGO NEW PLAYFORD COACH

Perplexed Premier League club Playford Patriots have been successful after sending an SOS to former West Adelaide Sharks midfielder Hugo Gimenez to take over as senior coach.

Gimenez met his new charges for the first time last Thursday night after agreeing to accept the position the previous night.

The job description is simple, please rescue the club from the threat of relegation.

When Gimenez took the job, Playford occupied 12th place on the Premier League ladder with just one win and a draw keeping it above fellow northern areas club Para Hills Knights.

The skilful Argentine-born, played for Racing Club and Ducksud before migrating to Australia in 1988 when he signed for Parramatta Eagles.

Three seasons later he switched to Auburn United before returning to Parramatta Eagles for two years.

Gimenez then was recruited by NSW club, Bonnyrigg, before he joined the Adelaide Sharks for the 1992/93 season making 24 NSL appearances.

He played in Singapore and Hong Kong and then returned to the NSL with Eastern Pride before coming back to Adelaide where he accepted a dual role with the Blue Eagles as a Premier League player and coach of the Blues Under 23 squad.

A stint with the Port Pirie City Club was followed by a demanding senior coaching role with White City Warriors, when he combined playing with his clipboard duties.

His work at Woodville West Reserve brought this comment in the SASF 2001 Year Book "Hugo Gimenez was appointed player/coach in round six and his professional attitude and experience helped the Warriors to gain respectability and it can now look forward to a better future."

The last coaching task taken by Gimenez was as Under 23 boss of the Adelaide Galaxy Under 23 squad.

KINGS COACH ABDICATES

Former Adelaide City player Ernie Luongo has become yet another Premier League coaching casualty after tendering his

resignation when his team suffered their fifth successive loss last Saturday.

Kings president Richard Bator said all efforts were made to have Luongo reverse his decision, but that he was adamant it would be in the best interests of the club that he quit.

Another ex-Adelaide City player, John Christopoulos and last years skipper Shane Porter will share the coaching duties until a full time coach is appointed.

BACK BEHIND THE MIKE

The radio soccer men from 5RTI have been stranded on the substitutes bench for around six months, but returned on the new call sign of 531AM last Saturday morning.

Rob Pepicelli, Paul Pellizzari and Sunday Mail soccer writer Val Migliaccio were sadly missed during a prolonged absence when negotiations were conducted for the sale of Radio Station 531AM.

The soccer enthusiasts air a full-on football program each Saturday from 11am-1pm and follow with a live Match of The Day broadcast of a local Premier League or State League fixture.

The opening broadcast last Saturday was the Blue Eagles v MetroStars clash from the Marden Sports.

Apart from the featured game, progress scores from Premier and State League games are aired, providing a service unequalled in any other State of Australia.

Just how keen was the SA Italian community to have their Radio Televisione Italiana (5RTI) back on the air?

The answer Passionate in the extreme, shelling out a record price (\$400,000) for the broadcasting licence.

Last year over 11,000 people signed petitions to save the station after it was forced off the 92.7FM frequency, which was awarded to dance music station Fresh FM.

Apart from the soccer, the new 531AM frequency broadcasts a mixture of news, cultural programs, entertainment and general sport.

HIGH HOPES

Forget Crespo and Batistuta, the Blue Eagles fans are waiting to applaud two other Argentine players in the local competition.

Pablo Duran, 23, and Hugo Rosales, 25, arrived in Adelaide early this month and have been patiently awaiting clearances from their respective clubs in Venezuela.

Striker Duran and midfielder Rosales are expected to add much needed experience to the Blues, who are being expertly guided by new coach Dragan Sipka.

At press time, Soccer Australia, like the Blue Eagles, still had not received the necessary paper work.

ANGIE IN ADELAIDE

Australian Under 17 coach Angie Postecoglou is due in Adelaide tomorrow (Wednesday, May 21) to run his selection rule over the SASI squad as it takes on White City Woodville at the Hindmarsh Stadium from 7pm.

The good judges reckon that goalkeeper Nick Crossley, Michael Matricciani, Tony Hatzis and Keegan Nash are likely Joey candidates, but you can bet all the other up and comers will be striving hard to impress.

The Jokeys are pencilled in to play two away games against Finland later this year, providing additional incentive to the future stars.



U17 Coach Ange Postecoglou will be in Adelaide looking at potential players from the SASI squad for his Jokeys side.

SA AMATEURS PREPARE

SA Amateur League coach Eric Norman and his assistant Gary Collis have chosen a

formidable preliminary squad for the pending Australian championships to be held in Sydney next month.

The squad, to be managed by Hugh McGibbin, is Jamie Hart (Blue Eagles), Tony Reeves, Arthur Dalakis, Scott Wilson (Salisbury Inter), Tyson Vickers (St Peters), Melo Graziano, Adam Malia (Fulham Utd), Steve McGregor (Macedonia Utd), Steve Cooney, Trevor Elliott (Florina), Steve Stivy, Dave Eggers, Andy Kokot, Andy Locke, Gary Aitken, Ian Kirk (Para Hills East), Vito Malavindi, Steve Gray (Salisbury Villa), Zelko Popovic (Budapest), Ray Coull (Parafield Gdns).

Normans intended conquerers have been warming up against Premier League opposition from Adelaide City and State League hot shots the Pirates.

STAN HAS A PLAN

Socceroo Stan Lazaridis dropped a hint on Adelaide radio that he is working on a possible tour of Australia by his English club Birmingham.

"Stan The Man" as he was affectionately known when he played for NSL club West Adelaide Sharks, is keen on the idea of an off season trip by his club.

Perth, the city of his birth, is high on his wish list as a venue with Perth Glory the obvious opponent.

As always, suitable terms would need to be agreed, but Lazaridis, who owns property and has business interests in Adelaide, is about to raise the flag and see who salutes.

PREMIER LEAGUE ROUND 12

Saturday, May 24

Galaxy v MetroStars

(Camden Sports Park)

Croydon Kings v Olympic FC

(Polonia Reserve)

Playford Patriots v Blue-Eagles

(Ramsay Park)

Raiders v Modbury Jets

(Gepps Cross)

White City v Adelaide City

(Woodville West)

Para Hills Knights v Enfield Falcons

(The Paddocks)

SA PREMIER LEAGUE RESULTS ROUND 11

Playford Patriots 4 (Farncombe 3, Reynolds) Enfield Falcons 2 (Tsekis, Fowler). Best Playford: Farncombe, Reynolds, Thomson; Enfield Falcons: Parry, Thomson, Fowler.

Croydon Kings 0, Modbury Jets 1 (Breton). Best Croydon: Chamstrom, Matikulas, D. Christison; Modbury: Marwe, Kelly, Plunkett.

Blue Eagles 0 MetroStars 5 (Schimizzi 2, Artone 2, Sordillo). Best Blue Eagles: Pezos, M. Pirone, Lastella; MetroStars: Artone, Sordillo, Schimizzi.

Para Hills Knights 5 (Jones, Burton, Waine, Brooks, tog). Olympic FC 4.

Galaxy 1 (Carvalho) White City Woodville 0. Best Galaxy: Cartwright, Utjesenovic, DiMella; White City: Leane, Keens, D. Stam.

Raiders 2 (Sabljak, Trimboli) Adelaide City 1 (Saric). Best Raiders: Yates, Sabljak, Cerrachio; Adelaide City: Bearzotti, Mercurio, Spanolo.

STATE LEAGUE

Cumberland Foxes 4 (Leet, Donk, Low, Margaritis) Western Strikers 0. Best Cumberland: Mitchell, Fusco, Gagliardi; Strikers: Esposito, Musci, Zanella.

Panthers 8 (Calvanese 2, Clarke, Lauriello, Thompson, Cant, Price, Sobczynski) Port Pirie City 0. Best Panthers: Calvanese, Clarke, Lauriello; Port Pirie: Bellifemini, DeCelis, Farrugia.

Salisbury United 0 Noarlunga Bulldogs 4 (P. Paris, S. Huybregts, Forster, tog). Best Salisbury: Deeley, Marcucci, McKenna; Noarlunga: P. Paris, Marsh, Forster.

Cobras 2 (T. Tsounis, H. Skoumbros) Campbelltown City 5 (Staltari 3, Anastasiou, Annicchiaro). Best Cobras: P. Harpas, Tsounis, H. Skoumbros; Red Devils: Staltari, Anastasiou, Signorello.

Seaford Surfers 0 Pirates 6. Northern Demons 1 (Talbot) Hills Hawks 1 (Harvey). Best Demons: Ainsworth, Steele, Giancaspro; Hills Hawks: Keegan, Thrun, Butler.

VICTORIAN PREMIER LEAGUE 2002/03

ROUND 13

Fri, 16 May, 8:15 PM

Port Melbourne Sharks SC0 Bulleen Zebras SC1
(Damir Gnjidic, 31 minutes)

Sun, 18 May, 3:00 PM

Frankston Pines SC1 Altona East Phoenix SC1
(Hader P)

St Albans Saints SC0 Preston Lions SC2
(Emsovski C, Cuculeski N)

Fawkner Blues SC1 Bentleigh Greens SC0
(Deak A)

Altona Magic SC4 Essendon Royals SC0
(Mladenovic D, Cergovski P, Becvinovski S (2))

	P	W	D	L	F	A	PT
1. Altona Magic SC	13	8	3	2	28	13	27
2. Preston Lions SC	13	8	2	3	24	16	26
3. Green Gully Cavaliers SC	12	7	4	1	26	8	25
4. Frankston Pines SC	13	6	4	3	28	20	22
5. Whittlesea Stallions SC	12	7	1	4	24	19	22
6. St Albans Saints SC	13	6	3	4	16	16	21
7. Essendon Royals SC	13	5	3	5	16	19	18
8. Bulleen Zebras SC	13	4	4	5	25	25	16
9. Fawkner Blues SC	13	4	4	5	14	24	16
10. Bentleigh Greens SC	13	3	4	6	19	24	13
11. Altona East Phoenix SC	13	1	3	9	10	22	6

ROUND 14

Sat, 24 May, 3:00 PM

Bentleigh Greens SC vs. St Albans

Sun, 25 May, 3:00 PM

Preston Lions vs. Frankston Pines

AltonaEast vs. Port Melbourne

Sharks

Essendon Royals vs. Fawkner Blues

Green Gully Cavaliers vs. Bulleen

Zebras

Mon, 26 May, 8:15 PM



In their debut season, the Frankston Pines sit in fourth position in the VPL.



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133 Pine Road, Richlands. QLD.

www.qldlions.com



Premier League Round 10 *By Glenn Davis*

LIONS AND CITY SHARE THE SPOILS

By Glenn Davis

Queensland Lions' lead at the top of the Brisbane premier league was reduced to only four points after a hard fought 1-all draw with arch rivals Brisbane City at Spencer Park on Sunday.

After a scoreless first half Lions looked to have had three points in the bag when striker Greg Di Losa scored off a corner in

the 70th minute for a 1-nil lead in front of officials from English premier club Blackburn Rovers.

City's goal sneak Jon San Martin grabbed a late equaliser one minute from time heading home off a touch from Mark Battistin.

Blackburn officials were at the game as part of a possible future affiliation with national league hopefuls Queensland Lions.

Lions chief executive Lawrence

Oudendyk said Blackburn was keen to tap into the youth development in Queensland but negotiations were still in the early stages.

"The idea is we want to identify the best youth in Queensland and bring them to Lions as part of our youth development plan," Oudendyk said.

"Blackburn are looking to get involved and if they do they'll come out here once a year and look at offering apprenticeships," he said.

Lions' draw took the defending champions to 22 points with two losses in ten rounds, three points clear of Taringa and Rochdale.

Rochdale Rovers retained second place with Taringa after disposing of relegation favourites The Gap 4-nil away while Taringa downed Palm Beach 2-nil.

Taringa's goals came in each half from Steve Unsworth and Andy King.

Rochdale led only 1-nil at halftime after Gareth Dorey scored the first of a double three minutes from the break with a header.

Dorey had two bites at scoring, striking his first attempt off a John Weatherby corner onto the crossbar before collecting the rebound with a header.

In a scrappy affair, Rochdale had to wait until the final 15 minutes before completing the rout.

Grant Marshall started a run outside the box and beat two defenders before slotting home from inside the box for Rochdale's second in the 75th minute.

Dorey's second came from another header to give Rochdale an unassailable 3-nil lead while youngster Carl Tabulo came off the bench to drive the final nail in The Gap's coffin.

Tabulo managed to catch The Gap out on the break after superbly cutting inside a defender before slotting home for his first premier league goal.

Rochdale coach Keiran Cooper was delighted to come away from the The Gap with maximum points although conceding his side played below par.

"The first half was scrappy on the bumpy pitch and they would have been disappointed to concede so late in the half," Cooper said.

"We didn't play well in the first half but we changed it around after the break.

"I suppose they had one contentious point when they appealed for a penalty when we led 1-nil.

"But when you are down at the end of the table things just don't seem to go your way.

"I know what it's like after being in the same situation for the most of last season."

With only one match remaining to the season's half way mark, The Gap is six points adrift at the foot of the table behind second last placed Ipswich, who drew nil all with Toowoomba at Bundamba.

Pine Rivers leapfrogged back into fourth place on the table with a high scoring 5-3 win over Wynnum.

Pine Rivers were again missing player-coach Clayton Koch who was in Melbourne on work commitments and veteran defender Mark Greer.

Pine Rivers led 3-nil at the break and added another two in the second half while Wynnum replied with three of their own.

Rivers' goals came from a double by Darren Bender, Barry Browett, Koji Kanagawa and Ceb Thatchell while Shaun Coffey netted a double and Anthony Roche the other for Wynnum.

Wynnum were on top of the table early in the season and were playing so well they appeared the only side capable of pinching the title from favourites Queensland Lions.

Coach Kevin Meacock blamed the loss of Shane Gilroy for disrupting Wynnum's normal rock-solid defence.

"We didn't defend well enough. Shane Gilroy was out and we had to make a reshuffle but we got caught out too many times," Meacock said.

"They played well but we hit the crossbar three times in the first half which was unfortunate.

"We created some scoring opportunities but didn't take them and it wouldn't have been too bad if we went in at half time trailing 2-1 instead of three nil."

Wynnum played with more intensity after the break and reduced Pine Rivers' lead to 3-2 when Roche scored.

However, the home side caught Wynnum out twice on the break late to

wrap up the match.

"Trailing 3-2 we were on top and looking good but then they got us twice on the rebound and we couldn't come back from there," Meacock said.

Souths, one of the other clubs hoping to avoid relegation in its first season in premier league, picked up a crucial three pointer downing North Star 2-1.

After a scoreless first half the sides were still locked nil-all with 15 minutes remaining before Brendan Young broke the deadlock racing onto a perfectly weighted pass to slow home from close range.

North Star hit back soon after to again draw level following a Shaun Blackman header before the winner came close to the final whistle from a corner set piece.

Mark Riley struck the corner to the near post where Chris Burley glanced his header into the net for a Souths victory.

Souths coach Peter Bannon couldn't fault either side's effort in an untidy game and is wary his side may need more points than originally anticipated to avoid relegation.

"It's one of those years where it's so tight I think to stay up a club is going to need more points than they thought at the start of the season," Bannon said.

North Star coach Ken Swan, who is also one of those hoping to avoid the drop, was disappointed not to get a point from the game.

"It was a game we needed to win as next week we play Pine Rivers at home and it's going to be a real derby," Swan said.

"Pine Rivers took four or five of our players from us at the start of the year so there'll be a lot of tension."

Premier League 2003

As at Round: 10

	P	W	L	D	PTS
QLD LIONS	10	7	2	1	22
TARINGA	10	6	3	1	19
ROCHEDALE	10	6	3	1	19
PINE RIVERS	10	6	4	0	18
BRIS. CITY	10	5	4	1	16
WYNNUM	10	5	4	1	16
PALM BEACH	10	4	5	1	13
SOUTHS	10	4	5	1	13
NORTH STAR	10	4	5	1	13
TOOWOOMBA	10	3	4	3	12
IPSWICH	10	2	5	3	9
THE GAP	10	1	9	0	3

Premier League: Rochdale 4 (Garreth Dorey 2, Grant Marshall, Carl Tabulo) d The Gap 0, Pine Rivers 5 (Darren Bender 2, Barry Bowett, Kouji Kanagawa, Sebastian Tatchell) d Wynnum 3 (Shane Coffey 2, Anthony Roach), Souths Utd 2 (Brendan Young, Chris Burley) d North Star 1 (Shaun Blackman), Ipswich Knights 0 v Toowoomba 0, Brisbane City 1 (Jon San Martin) v Qld Lions 1 (Greg Di-Losa), Taringa 2 (Steve Unsworth, Andrew King) d Palm Beach 0.

First Division 2003

As at Round: 10

	P	W	L	D	PTS
CAPALABA	12	9	1	1	28
EASTS	12	8	1	2	26
UNI OF QLD	12	7	3	1	22
MITCHELTON	12	6	3	2	20
BRIS. OLYMPIC	12	5	2	4	19
PENINSULA	12	5	5	1	16
ROCKLEA	12	4	4	3	15
ALBANY CK	12	4	5	2	14
REDLANDS	12	2	5	4	10
INALA	12	2	6	3	9
MT GRAVATT	12	2	7	3	9
BEENLEIGH	12	2	7	2	8
NEWMARKET	12	2	9	0	6

First Division: Peninsula 2 d Beenleigh 0, Albany Ck 2 d Inala 1, Capalaba 4 d Redlands 0, Easts 5 d Rocklea 0, Mt Gravatt 2 d Newmarket 0, UQ 3 d Olympic 1.

ROUND 11 FIXTURES

SATURDAY MAY 24

NORTH STAR	v	PINE RIVERS UTD	7:00PM	O'Call. Pk
ROCHEDALE ROV	v	BRISBANE CITY	7:00PM	U'Wood Pk
T'WMBA RAIDERS	v	TARINGA ROVERS	5:30PM	ST. TOOW
PALM BEACH SHARKS	v	SOUTHS UTD	7:00PM	Palm. Bch
WYNNUM	v	THE GAP	7:00PM	Carm.Pk

SUNDAY MAY 25

QUEENSLAND LIONS	v	IPSW KNIGHTS	4:00PM	Lions SD
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VICTORIAN CHRONICLES

By Brendon Davis

South - No To Peterson

Former coach and player Michael Peterson will not be coaching South Melbourne.

While he interviewed favourably and made the final two person short list (with Stuart Munro) feeling amongst sponsors and supporters is so strong that Peterson can't be offered any role at his former club.

The depth of the resentment following his defection to the Football Kings in 2001 means Peterson is unlikely to ever be welcomed back to his former club. He is seen as the instigator in the mass defection to Auckland following the grand final loss to Wollongong.

Many Lakeside still feel South had a squad that was vastly superior to that of the Wolves but failed to capture the title as Peterson was focusing on his negotiations with the Kingz at a time he should have been concentrating on his team's Premiership aspirations.

Peterson took several key players with him to New Zealand, including strikers Con Boutsianis and Andy Vlahos together with a goalkeeper, fitness adviser and team manager.

another former Knights player. Mursic's asking price is likely to be beyond the Knights budget.

Given the Knights have one of the lowest playing budgets in the competition, they struggle to attract established players. But the Knights traded profitably this season, with a surplus of over \$200,000 enabling a further reduction in their carried forward debt.

And with several sales of players to overseas (see ABSW 13/5) the Knights will secure a further significant injection of funds once the European transfer window opens.



Vlado Vanis: Former Knights coach is in the running for the side's top job.

South Board Elect Office Bearers

The new South Board met on Tuesday night. The board elected the following officers being:

President: Peter Mitrakas
Chairman: Panos Margaritis
Senior Vice President: Leo Athanasakis
Vice President: Peter George
Secretary: Peter Papos
Treasurer: Peter Skrepetis

The only change on last season is Leo Athanasakis suprisingly replacing Nick Maikousis as Vice President. Maikousis remains as a director.

Waiting?

Which players are waiting for June 30 to pass before their clubs will transfer them to new European Clubs.

The expiry of the Collective Bargaining Agreement

is surely a factor as the PFA for some reason take a percentage from the Clubs transfer revenue.

At a board meeting in Sydney yesterday the quartet are believed to have decided to call for nominations to fill the vacant board seats left free by the resignations last week of former Soccer Australia chairman Remo Nogarotto and two of his colleagues, Robert Sestan and Walter Bugno.

That trio stepped aside - in line with the recommendations of the Crawford inquiry - to allow a smooth transition for Lowy's team. But the four who stayed put - Bill Walker, Dominic Galati, Les Avory

and Paul Afkos - are holding out to try to force Lowy to take some notice of the interests of the game's current stakeholders.

The Government and, by extension, Lowy believe that much of the sport's problems can be sheeted home to its current administrative structure and constitution, which vests much power in the current stakeholders.

Lowy is adamant he will have no input from any of them while he pursues the Crawford reform agenda, which would change the constitution dramatically and reduce the influence of state federations

EDITORIAL

CAN THE COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT

All NSL Clubs have a refreshing opportunity come this 30th June as they can be freed from the shackles of the despised Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) forced on the clubs initially in 1999.

Weak management, at both NSL and Club level forced a horrendous CBA on the clubs. Sadly the Australian Soccer authorities had such weak management the PFA was able to railroad through their CBA.

Last year, with SA in a state of disarray, the PFA quietly forced a 12-month extension on the Clubs who were poorly represented by their governing body.

Two SA Chairman later, with the governing body still in disarray, the NSL clubs have surely learned the hard lesson - a CBA is unnecessarily restrictive while encumbering the development of Australian Soccer.

Over the years the PFA, given the crazy CBA agreement, have skimmed hundreds of thousands off the top of transfer proceeds - dollars desperately needed by the NSL Clubs.

Soccer would be the only trade in the world where the Union involved takes a commission on the sale of the employers assets.

But the CBA has worked against the very people the PFA claims to support - struggling professional and semi professional soccer players.

It is cruel and restrictive on those young inexperienced players trying out for an NSL contract. For example, it prevents clubs from entering into more than one short-term contract, so rather than take a

risk with an unproven youngster, the player is simply denied an NSL contract.

But the CBA was also used by the PFA to extort funds from the clubs. The PFA sought, and received, \$120,000 "in connection with the use of images of the players on television and in the promotion of the game".

That's \$10,000 from every Australian NSL Club - for visual rights for a sport that doesn't get any television time.

This agreement imposes limitations on certain training sessions, dates on which games can be played and naturally, requires the PFA be involved with any grievance between a player and club.

Several clubs have already made it clear they will not enter into a new agreement with the PFA under any circumstances; this year the clubs must not capitulate to the Union, soccer as a code can't afford it.

When June 30 passes the NSL clubs, for the good of the sport must maintain their resolve, they must not entertain the prospect of any collective agreement.

And Also

Over the last six months the Soccer Australia Board achieved more than their predecessors did in 6 years.

This includes the critical task of restoring Soccer Australia's finances, securing some critical major sponsorships, resolving the IMG impasse and the magnificent Socceroos result against England.

But the rump of directors refusing to resign threaten to have history remember them for their obstruction rather than their role in resurrecting the fortunes of Soccer Australia.



Mike Peterson will not be coaching South Melbourne next season.

He remains close friends with several of the players but the sponsors in particular will block any attempted return by the man known as "Mickey P".

Branko Culina is expected to be appointed as South coach this week.

At the Knights

Meanwhile the Knights' board meets during the week to consider their growing candidate list, which includes former player Joe Biskic; player and former coach Vlado Vanis; Croatian Franjo Domic ex-Bulleen coach Joe Mullen; and Kresimir Marusic,

NEWS FROM THE NATIONS CAPITAL

By Graham Cooke

STANDARD OF ACT FOOTBALL

The standard of football in the ACT Premiership has declined in the two-and-a-half years he has been playing in England, Canberra Deakin central midfielder Scott Conlon says.

Speaking after being substituted as Deakin strolled to a 6-0 win over University of Canberra Pumas, Conlon said he realised the area's best players were still involved with the Belconnen Blue Devils in the NSW Premier League.

"But we had that before with the Canberra Cosmos in the National League," he said. "What we are seeing, which is very worrying, is some of the better players going off to join Wollongong teams in the Illawarra League."

"There's about a dozen doing that and it's tearing the guts out of the competition. You have to ask yourself why they are preferring to travel to the South Coast rather than play here."

Conlon has no intention of joining the exodus, planning to stay with Deakin during the winter season while holding out the possibility of trialling with the Devils for the 2003-04 campaign.

After leaving Canberra, where he learnt his soccer with Tuggeranong United, he spent some time playing around the Manchester area before being picked up by

Harrogate Town from Yorkshire, then competing in the second division of the Unibond League.

"Going up the ladder there's Unibond Division 1, the Vauxhall Conference, then Division 3 of the Nationwide League," he said.

ACT Premiership Round-Up

An astonishing second-half surrender by Capital City Suns allowed Canberra Deakin to rattle up their biggest total of the ACT Premiership season so far, with an 8-1 win at Deakin Oval.

Elsewhere Gungahlin Juventus did it the hard way for the second consecutive match. Last week they trailed ANU 3-0 before winning 5-3, this time it was Canberra City who were allowed to take the initiative, leading 2-0 before being pegged back for a point in a 2-2 draw.

There was an ugly scene in the game between Tuggeranong United and Canberra Olympic, which resulted in a linesman being assaulted. An individual is under investigation by Soccer Canberra. Tuggeranong won 1-0.

And Cooma continue to be the surprise of the season, a 2-1 win over ANU lifting the newly promoted club to third place on the Premiership table.

At half time against Deakin, the Suns were 2-0 down and still had a finger hold on the game. That quickly disappeared after a triple substitution and a reshuffle saw easily the team's best defender, Michael Seleke, shunted into the midfield where he spent the remainder of the game looking uncomfortable and out-of-place.

Worse still, his absence in the back-line left gaping holes that Deakin gratefully exploited, putting the game beyond doubt with two goals in the first seven minutes after the interval. From there they continued to find the net for the rest of the game as the contest slipped into near farce.

To be fair Deakin do have an overwhelming armoury of talent. Witness Andrew Barisic who came off the bench in the 63rd minute, scored with his first touch of the game, and laid a goal on for the prolific Zvonko Usljebrka with his second.

That wasn't all for the youngster who so often starred in Deakin's National Youth League line-up during the summer, he also crossed for Usljebrka to head home the final strike of the game and put the cap on the Suns' misery, in the 81st minute.

Usljebrka scored five, and surely only a prolonged injury can stop him picking up the competition's Golden Boot award for the second consecutive season. It could easily have been a double hat trick: before he had got on the score sheet Suns goalkeeper Peter Flores saved his penalty kick. Besides Barisic, the other Deakin scorers were Michael Spaleta and Paul Ivanic.

For the Suns, Dominic Bartone can claim some consolation as the first player to score a Premiership goal against Deakin this season.

Deakin coach Miro Tomic said the first half had been even and quite hard for his team. "I put the eventual result down to our dedication and enthusiasm at training," he said. "I do believe we were the fitter side, and we

have the players that can worry defences. There are five who can play as strikers, Usljebrka, Barisic, Spaleta, Paul Ivanic and Steven Lee, so we have plenty of choice."

Goals from Will Schneider and Marcus Lamb gave City a 2-0 lead against Juventus, but the game began to unravel for Canberra when Danny Byrne was sent off for a second yellow card offence after being judged to have pushed Marcial Munoz in the penalty area; Steve Lazzari scored from the spot.

Against 10 men, George Cattinach grabbed the equaliser with five minutes left.

Travis Dreis scored the only goal of the game for Tuggeranong against Olympic, who had Steve Vanzetti sent off after 10 minutes, and Nathan Caldwell scored a double for Cooma against ANU after Darren Limbrick had given the university the lead from the penalty spot.

ACT PREMIERSHIP

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Canberra Deakin	4	4	0	0	22	1	12
Gungahlin Juventus	4	2	2	0	11	8	8
Cooma	4	2	1	1	7	7	7
Canberra Olympic	4	2	0	2	11	6	6
Capital City Suns	4	2	0	2	8	10	6
Canberra City	4	1	2	1	4	5	5
Tuggeranong United	4	1	2	1	4	5	5
*Uni of Canberra	3	0	2	1	1	7	2
ANU	4	0	1	3	5	11	1
*Belconnen United	3	0	0	3	2	13	0

*Result unavailable

Joey Didulica: I'll be able to grow with Vienna



Joe Didulica: Getting ready for his stint with Austria Vienna.

Aussie goalkeeper Joey Didulica explains his heart-wrenching decision to leave his club of four years, Ajax, for ambitious Austria Vienna.

Ajax Amsterdam goalkeeper Joey Didulica says his Bosman move to Austrian champions, Austria Wien, in the summer will set him up for life.

The Australia U23 international will move to Vienna at the end of the season after agreeing terms with the Austrian club last month. Didulica was flooded with offers after an outstanding Champions League campaign in the group rounds this season.

"From a professional perspective, the club had already clinched the Austrian title with six games to go, so they're definitely heading in the right direction," Didulica told tribalfutbol.com.

"With these titles come the opportunity to play regularly in the Champions League, which I think has proved to be the most important competition in club football.

"The club has the ambition to become a regular participant at that level, and I want to be a part of that. I think you can star for seasons at club level and often go unnoticed, but if you can produce those performances in the Champions League, they really get magnified."

Didulica also revealed that Ajax simply couldn't match what Vienna put on the table. "Financially the offer is good enough to set me up for life," the Aussie continued.

"Money is never the only thing you look at when

you're signing a contract but it's important to me that when I leave the game I know that my sacrifices have been worthwhile. "It's not easy leaving family and friends so you want to make sure that you don't sell yourself short. "Some people have told me it's a step down but I disagree. I see it as two steps up. I knew what I wanted out of my professional career and Austria Wien were the best positioned to provide that." The former Melbourne Knights No1 admitted that he was almost tempted to sign with a Russian club as the bidding took place. "I had offers from Spain, France, Holland and even an offer from Russia that I thought about seriously. As a Bosman, and coming off a good Champions League run with Ajax, it made finding a new club much easier- choice wise. "It was a luxury to be able to pick and choose where I wanted to go, but in an ironic way it didn't make the decision any easier. The thing that distinguished the Austria Wien offer from the rest was the ability to play in Europe regularly."

Ajax trainer Ronald Koeman is sorry to see his Aussie shot-stopper go and Didulica confirmed that the former Dutch star tried hard to convince him to stay on.

"I spoke with Ronald Koeman, along with assistant Ruud Krol, about the move at some length after I had decided to move. "He was extremely disappointed about losing me for next season and was disappointed that I hadn't come to him personally for some guidance. I felt honored as a player that he had such a high opinion of me, to see how keen he was to keep me at the club."

Didulica admits it's a massive wrench to leave Ajax, but it was a decision he feels happy with. "Ajax has been my home for the last four years. I've grown enormously as a goalkeeper and as a person, and it is a wonderful place in which to be schooled not only in football, but in being a professional."

"That being said, as an Australian you sacrifice so much to pursue a professional career in Europe. I had to ensure my next step, made all my sacrifices worthwhile. "Ajax just couldn't compete with the offers I had received so I had to balance my professional prospects and the ability to secure my financial future, against my affection for Ajax. "Unfortunately when I realised I couldn't achieve

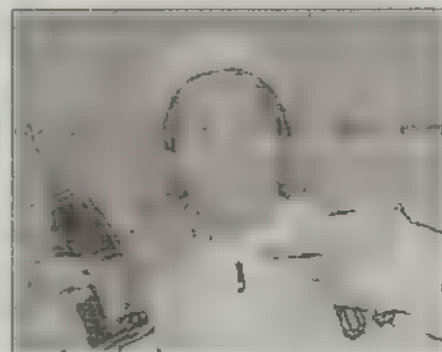
those professional and financial goals with Ajax, I had to move."

Didulica says playing regularly in the Champions League as Austria Wien's No1 can only enhance his chances of challenging the likes of Middlesbrough's Mark Schwarzer for the Australia goalkeeper's jersey. "I don't think you can afford to dwell on representative honours too much. If you just focus on doing the right things at club level, international opportunities tend to find you. I don't agree with selling yourself to the national team."

"It's your performances and achievements at club level that should get you picked. "It would be great to be a part of the Socceroos, as it is important to me. It's a career goal that I really want to achieve. "With direct qualification, the stakes are even higher because the opportunity to play in a World Cup is so much greater."

Didulica also urges Soccer Australia to improve communication between its front office and Australian pros playing overseas. "It's hard to keep connected from so far away. It would be handy if Soccer Australia was able to put an international calendar of matches together to ensure that the Socceroos get to play more games. "This gives all the guys a greater chance to interact and gives Frank Farina an opportunity to see more players."

"As it stands now, I think there's been one game since the loss to Uruguay. It's certainly something that Soccer Australia should address as a priority."



Didulica shown with a fine bottle of bubbly.

PREMIERSHIP BIZARRO

Nige and Derek here from BananaTV's Premiership Bizarro. Every week we give you our views and opinions on what's going on, and off, in the English Premiership.

Another Premiership campaign has come to its conclusion. As we look back over the battlefields, there has been the usual amount of casualties. The Generals that have fallen in battle are numerous.

Operation Sunderland and Camp Wilko proved to be one of the most outrageous assignments of all time. It seemed the Black Cats got stuck in time as they inexplicably appointed Football dinosaur Seargentius Wilkoloses. It seemed apparent to any person with a couple of neurons, except the Sunderland board, that the obvious choice was Mike McCarthy.

The fact that this is who was hired 5 months later makes the situation all the more ridiculous. By then it was too late for Royston Keane's mate to do anything about the decision. Sgt Wilko's strategy of running his troops into the ground at boot camp left them knackered for the battle on the weekend. Sunderland is subsequently licking their debts in the Nationwide over that balls up.

Equally as ludicrous was the resurrection of veteran warhorse, Tel Boy Vegetables. Poor ol' Tel Boy was on a hiding to nothing after inheriting the pile of poo left behind by Special Agent, Leary David. And boy, did that

pile stink. The only geezer who couldn't smell it was Tel. Rizzo Ridsale blew sunshine and roses up Tel's backside, making him totally oblivious to the cesspit of debt that was overflowing in the background. Or so Tel would have us believe. Subsequently, no matter how many players were shovelled out the door, at a loss, the pile of poo would not get any smaller. In fact, it grew. Tel Boy and Rizzo were also shovelled out as Professors of Economics. John McKenzie took over the supervision of s*** shovelling. Now it is the problem of Sunderland reject, MonkeyHeed Peter Reid. Reidy landed the job after The Arse choked... again, keeping the Elland Junction soap opera in a prime time slot for next season.

Another unfortunate casualty of the Premiership war was caused by friendly fire at Upton Sheds, where Glen Roderge's company of young guns chose the last 4 games of the season to show they can play football. However, it was all in vain as a record 42 points saw them relegated and Glen Roeder in hospital with a stroke. We wish you a speedy recovery Glen and advise a career change in the summer. Expect to see the Hammer's kids

scattered all over the land come the start of the new campaign. The other outfit that dropped into the quagmire of Nationwide football was WBA and Ginger Megson's collection of cheap and cheerful conscripts form all over the lower leagues of Europe. So little surprise there.

Pompey, Leicester and AN Other will be the replacements for the next campaign. Pompey gave everyone an insight into their future foray to the league of megabucks and megadebt when United, in the Sweet FA Cup, thumped them. Leicester are skint and AN Other looks like being Sheffield United with wild, ranting and raving gaffer, Ian Warnock. Any bets he starts a war of words with Sir Alex and anyone else that will listen?

And now the tributes and accolades to the winners. Man Utd are truly grinners. The propaganda war fought in the tabloids took a severe toll on The Arse's mentally fragile Gaelic contingent. United's charges fed off Sir Alex's branded bullshit while The Arse's flailing French behaved it. United's well drilled commandos destroyed everything that moved. The Arse traded in their Guns for peashooters and

got what they deserved. They need to learn that 55,000 passes don't win games and there are no rules that say you can only shoot inside the 6-yard box. As we've said all season, survive 30 minutes of flashy pressure and anyone can beat them. The Arse, and Arsey Wenger in particular, choked like Greg Norman in the '96 US Masters.

Making up the numbers for the mega-megabucks League were,

Newcastle, who after a valiant effort fell victim to Wayne Rooney's hio at Goodison Park. Chelsea, Cuddly Ken Bates and Master of English, Claudia Ranieri, did their best to throw it all away over the last 10 days to come up against Liverpool in a winner takes all last game. Luckily for Cuddly Ken, Liverpool have been throwing opportunities down the toilet all season.

So into the annals of Premiership history goes the 02/03 campaign and all the characters that gave us so much entertainment.

See you next week.
Premiership Bizarro

Catch Nige and Derek on Premiership Bizarro, their internet TV show, go to www.bananatv.com

And click on Premiership Soccer. New episodes added each week. Don't miss it.

2003 A DISASTER FOR THE COASTIES? ... THINK AGAIN!

By Ray Sandell

As usual, the knockers are again saying that the Central Coast Colorbond Coasties, who finished second last in the NSW Premier League, had a disastrous season. They should really study the facts!

True, the season ended on a disappointing note with eight consecutive losses, but there was more to the season than that statistic!

Let us consider the POSITIVES and NEGATIVES.

POSITIVE No.1. The team was the only one, except Blacktown City and APIA Leichhardt, who ended up first and second, to hold first position on the League table, during the season, which they did as the teams went into the Xmas/New Year recess.

POSITIVE No.2. The team had three players, namely, Josh Maguire, Marc Falzon and Chris Fleming selected in the NSW State squad.

POSITIVE No.3. James Monie was the winner of the Premier League "Golden Boot" award for being the competition's leading goalscorer.

POSITIVE No.4. Despite their late season performances, the Club still maintained good crowd attendances at Plum Park. The attendance for the Club's 21st Birthday celebrations at Central Coast Stadium, was close to 2,000, despite the night being very wet and cold, and continual rain for days before the event.

POSITIVE No.5. During the season the Club secured one of the largest sponsorship's in the League, when BHP Colorbond decided to support the Coasties for the next two years, with a possible extension. Colorbond were also Match Day Sponsors for the 21st. Birthday celebrations, a venture that greatly boosted the Club's finances.

POSITIVE No.6. The Club fielded a very inexperienced Under 19 team, which started the season with eleven, seventeen year old players. Despite their low position on the competition table, the team improved greatly during the season, and at the end of the year had two draws and a very narrow one goal loss, to the then three top teams in the competition.

POSITIVE No.7. Nearly all visiting clubs pronounced the playing surface at Plum Park close to the best surface in the League.

POSITIVE No.8. Long serving Coasties' player Sean Matthews was transferred to Singapore Club, Sankeng Marine, on a loan contract.

POSITIVE No.9. Probably the most important! The club showed during the season that they had a number of excellent up and coming players, from both grades, that should lead the Coasties into the future with confidence. The decision of both First Grade coach John McLafferty, and Under 19 coach Ian Brogan, to use young, and where possible, local players, was a complete success as, despite the many negative results both teams showed, at times, that they could mix it with most other sides in the League.

Now for the NEGATIVES!

NEGATIVE No.1. The poor late season results of the First Grade team after such a magnificent start.

NEGATIVE No.2. The apathy of the local supporters to assist in the management of the Club, which has survived with the same five or six people keeping the Club going over the last few years. But don't most clubs have that problem?

NEGATIVE No.3. Is there one?

Nine POSITIVES and two NEGATIVES! And the Club had a disastrous season?

If the Coasties can hang on to their many good players, and keep them away from the well financed Sydney clubs, they will improve over the next few seasons and will really silence the knockers!

Can't wait to see it!

NSWIS COMPLETE SUCCESSFUL EURO TOUR

The NSWIS recently returned from their annual tour of Europe where the youngsters managed to score nine wins out of ten matches – an amazing achievement.

Led by the 'Gav' Kelly Cross, the NSWIS boys matched some of Europe's best side's by scoring a handful of goals and playing a brilliant brand of football.

A strong squad of 18 assembled and took part in this European tour with a number of players catching the eyes of the many scouts present at the respective matches.

NSWIS, famous for producing the likes of Harry Kewell, Brett Emerton and Luke Wilshire to name a few is a program that has certainly benefited the development of many stars in Australia.

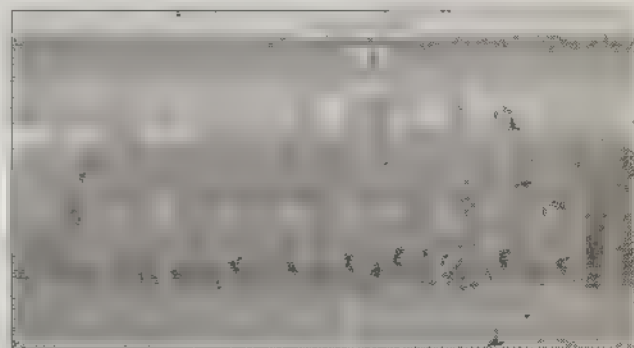
This current batch of young stars will be ones to watch out for in years to come.

TOURING PARTY

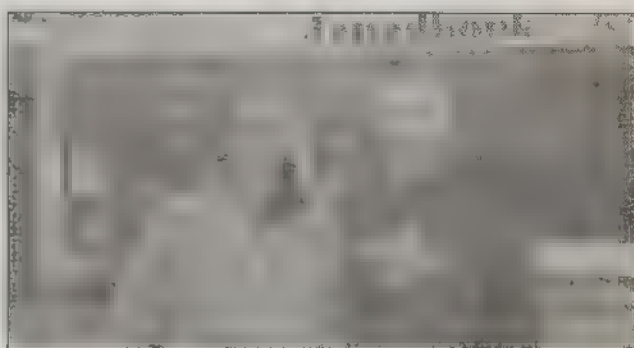
Head Coach: KELLY CROSS
Soccer NSW Representative: JEAN-PAUL DE MARIGNY
Assistant Coaches: CHRIS BRADLEY
CHRIS MINOL
Trainer: JONATHAN LAGRANGE

Players:
CHRIS BARONIAN
BRENDON BONEY
NATHAN BURNS
TAYFUN BUYUKKOPRU
DAVID D'APUZZO
BRUCE DJITE
DANIEL LIMA
BRENDAN MARONEY
DANIEL MILLER
CHRIS NUNES
WADE OOSTENDORP
ERIK PAARTALU
BRADLEY PORTER
HUSSEIN RACHID
CHRISTIAN SENCION
SHAY SPITZ
WILL THOM
BEN VIDAIC

Parent Club:
Blacktown City
Lake Albert, Wagga Wagga
Blayney, Country NSW
Marconi
Olympic Sharks
Northern Spirit
Olympic Sharks
Blacktown City
Marconi
Marconi
Marconi
Northern Spirit
Northern Spirit
Olympic Sharks
Marconi
Parramatta Eagles
Northern Spirit
Olympic Sharks



The NSWIS side 2003



Head NSWIS coach Kelly Cross (Right) shown with Soccer NSW Representative Jean-Paul De Marigny in front of Feyenoord's club set-up.

Results & Scorers

V WILLEM II (HOLLAND)	4-1
(Vidaic, Maroney, Miller, Sencion)	
V FORTUNA SITTARD (HOLLAND)	2-0
(Paartalu, Miller)	
V RACING GENK (BELGIUM)	9-0
(Paartalu 3, Maroney 3, Vidaic 2, own goal)	
V BORUSSIA DORTMUND (GERMANY)	3-0
(Miller, Sencion, Thom)	
V PSV EINDHOVEN (HOLLAND)	2-0
(Paartalu, Buyukkoprur)	
V BAYER LEVERKUSEN (GERMANY)	1-2
(Miller)	
V FEYENOORD (HOLLAND)	1-0
(Vidaic)	
V AJAX (HOLLAND)	3-1
(Djite, Porter, Miller)	
V MALMO (SWEDEN)	3-0
(Vidaic 2, Miller)	
V BROMMAPOJKARNA (SWEDEN)	4-0
(Miller 3, Spitz)	

GOALS FOR = 32, GOALS AGAINST =



The young squad shown assembled in front of De Kuip Stadium in Feyenoord.

Ex Carlton boss earns windfall

Former Carlton owner Peter Jess went to Italy hoping to pick up \$3 million and looks set to come home with \$1m on top of that.

Jess is in Rome for court hearings in the case against Serie A club Empoli for his slice of the transfer of Socceroo midfielder Marco Bresciano from Empoli to Parma last year.

Bresciano transferred from Carlton to Empoli for a nominal fee of \$120,000, but the contract had a sell-on clause entitling Carlton, and owner Jess, to a significant slice of any subsequent transfer.

Because Carlton folded, Empoli ignored calls for the \$3m from the club's administrator, forcing Jess to start legal proceedings four months ago. The first hearing took place in Rome on Friday, but there has been a dramatic development with Empoli willing to talk on a settlement out of court – for two players instead of one.

Empoli has a second former Blue on its books, Vince Grella, who is on the verge of a big-money transfer to AC Milan after an outstanding Serie A season.

Grella has a similar sell on clause which entitles Carlton to around 10 per cent of any subsequent transfer.

"We have a meeting with their lawyers on Thursday. They want to do a deal for both," Jess said from Rome last night.

The mooted transfer fee for Grella is

\$15m, but Jess said he would be willing to lower his cut if he was able to come back with the money for both players.

"It would be better to take a burn now. It has taken 12 months to get a hearing date in the Italian courts and the (legal) costs have been high," he said.

"We're not going to shift on the Bresciano figure, but we'd settle (for less) if they do a deal for both."

Jess and his lawyer Marco Selvaggi are due to meet Empoli's director of football Giuseppe Vitale and the club's lawyers in Florence tomorrow.

Carlton and Jess have a powerful ally on their side; FIFA has threatened sanctions, including relegation, as long as Jess drops legal proceedings and uses FIFA's tribunal system.

"FIFA's route is quicker," Jess said. "They've guaranteed us the case would be heard in June."

"We've forwarded our casebook to them, they've reviewed it and have declared we have a legal, binding contract."

"They've received a response from Empoli which doesn't dispute the contract or the sum owed, but argues that the club developed the player and wants the development fee to come off the transfer figure."

"To us they are simply stalling tactics. FIFA has told us to come back to them if we

don't reach a settlement on Thursday

"FIFA's involvement makes for a very powerful arbitrator and it ensures we get a sensible resolution."

The Carlton administrator will have first claim on any money Jess recovers, but Carlton's debts are less than \$1m.

Jess is set to walk away with a tidy sum for his short and stormy involvement in soccer.



Vince Grella: Empoli star is on the verge of scoring a big contract with Serie A high-flyers AC Milan.

Spurs in talks over Viduka

Tottenham are interested in signing Leeds United striker Mark Viduka after holding talks with the player's agent.

The Australian's agent Andrea D'Amico has revealed to planetfootball.com that he met with Spurs chairman Daniel Levy to talk about a possible move to White Hart Lane.

Spurs are in the market for a new striker, having released Teddy Sheringham, and it is believed that Viduka is top of Glenn Hoddie's wanted list.

D'Amico admitted that the player was happy at Leeds, but that he could move for the right offer with a number of clubs chasing his services.

"Yes I have met with Daniel Levy of Tottenham," D'Amico told planetfootball. "We had a general meeting about Mark."

"There are many clubs that are interested in Mark all across Europe."

"There is interest from Italy, England and Spain and I think the transfer market will be different from last year as he will be cheaper."

"Mark in my opinion is one of the best strikers in Europe."

Viduka could be sacrificed by Leeds in the summer as they look to ease their financial problems, but D'Amico revealed he would only

leave for a big club.

"Mark is in Australia now and before he left he told me he doesn't want to leave Leeds, but it may be in the interest of Leeds that he leaves," added D'Amico.

"If it is in the interest of the club to think of the future, they may decide to sell Viduka."

"If he were to go it would have to be a good offer and a big club."

"Mark is an interesting player and he would like to go to a good club if he was to leave."

"Roma are still interested in him and they are one of the options for him."

"We will wait and see what is on offer and I will meet with Leeds chairman John McKenzie to discuss the future."

Leeds supremo McKenzie has reacted with surprise at the reports, insisting the powerful centre forward is not for sale.

"We've had no approach for Mark Viduka from Spurs or any other club," McKenzie told the club's website.

"I am surprised to hear the claims of talks between an agent and Spurs because if this is true it would clearly constitute an illegal approach."

"Anyway, our position is that Mark Viduka is not for sale."




Historical NSL Stats

By Christopher Georgakopoulos


This is a look back at how the NSL Finalists of this season have gone all up in their history of being in the NSL FINALS, fighting for that all-important NSL Championship.

ADELAIDE CITY FORCE



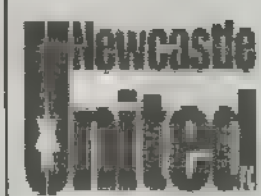
Champions: 1986, 1991/92, 1993/94
Runners Up: 1992/93, 1994/95
Premiers: -

Best Result: W4-0 vs Marconi 96/97
Worst Result: L1-4 vs Olympic 99/00
Biggest Crowd: 25067- L1-2 vs Perth 98/99 (WACA)
Most Games Played: 38 Alex Tobin 1986-99/00
Most Goals Scored: 8- Damian Mori 92/93, 98/99
Goalkeepers- most clean sheets: 8- Robert Zabica 90/91-93/94
Coach- most games coached: 38 Zoran Matic W21-D3-L14




Zoran Matic: Current Force coach holds the record for most games coached in the finals series.

NEWCASTLE UNITED



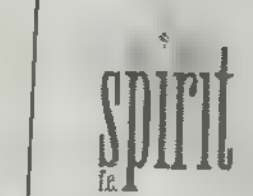
Champions: -
Runners Up: -
Premiers: -

Best Result: W2-0 vs Perth 01/02
Worst Result: L0-4 vs Perth 02/03
Biggest Crowd: 31963- L1-4 vs Perth 01/02 (Subiaco)
Most Games Played: 4 Scott Baillie 01/02, 02/03
Most Goals Scored: 2- Travis Dodd 02/03
Goalkeepers- most clean sheets: 1- Daniel Beltrame 01/02
Coach- most games coached: 10- Ian Crook W1-D1-L8



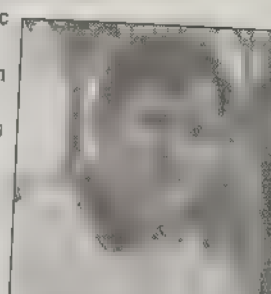
Daniel Beltrame has kept Newcastle at bay this season.

NORTHERN SPIRIT



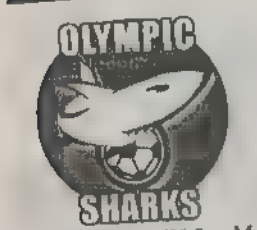
Champions: -
Runners Up: -
Premiers: -

Best Result: W3-1 vs Olympic 02/03
Worst Result: L5-0 vs Perth 02/03
Biggest Crowd: 17246- D0-0 vs Marconi 98/99 (North Sydney)
Most Games Played: 7- several occurrences
Most Goals Scored: 2- John Hutchinson
Goalkeepers- most clean sheets: 3- Paul Henderson 98/99
Coach- most games coached: 7- Lawrie McKinna W2-D1-L4




Spirit coach Lawrie McKinna has done a tremendous job with his side this season.

OLYMPIC SHARKS




Champions: 1989, 01/02
Runners Up: 1984, 1986, 1989
Premiers: 02/03

Best Result: W6-2 vs Melbourne Knights 01/02
Worst Result: L0-3 vs Northern Spirit 02/03
Biggest Crowd: 42735- W1-0 vs Perth 01/02 (Subiaco)
Most Games Played: 9- Gary Philips- 1984-1991/92
Most Goals Scored: 10- Ante Milcic 01/02, 02/03
Goalkeepers- most clean sheets: 6- Clint Bolton 00/01, 01/02, 02/03
Coach- most games coached: 14 Manfred Schaefer W8-D2-L4



Clint Bolton: Current shot-stopper holds the record for most clean sheets in a finals series.


PARRAMATTA POWER



The Power has yet to star in a Finals Series. In its four-year history, Parramatta Power this year did the unimaginable in a claiming a spot in the finals by finishing third.

At this point in time the side has done well in keeping in touch with the top two of the finals series

Playing an exciting brand of attacking football, the new look squad of this season saw 11 new players don the blue and gold jersey.



Pablo Cardozo: His striking ability will be called upon in the final matches of the finals series.

PERTH GLORY



Champions: -
Runners Up: 1999/00, 2001/2002
Premiers: 1999/00, 2001/02

Best Result: W6-1 vs Parramatta 02/03
Worst Result: L0-2 vs Newcastle United
Biggest Crowd: 43242- D3-3 vs Wollongong 99/00
Most Games Played: 20- Bobby Despotovski 98/99- 02/03
Most Goals Scored: 12- Bobby Despotovski 98/99-02/03
Goalkeepers- most clean sheets: 4- Jason Petkovic 99/00- 02/03
Coach- most games coached: 9- Bernd Stange W3-D4-L2



King Bobby Despotovski is on fire having scored a number of goals in Glory's cause for a Final win this year.

"WHERE ARE THEY NOW?"



By Daniela Raco

Ever wondered what happened to our stars of yesteryear? Here's a blast from the past. Many faces are still around.

Some are still well known around the soccer traps (commentary, coaching, and associations), others hold hopes for next season (sure!!), and there are those that prefer to slip quietly into the world of the unknown (in other words, they work a 9am-5pm day and are finally making a couple of \$\$\$). Soccer's a funny game.



ABBAS SAAD

Coaching some kids at Sydney Olympic juniors, and private coaching with the Australian Football Academy.



WALTER ARDONE

Working as a sales representative for "Compass Hospitality Supplies". Playing golf and going to the races.

DAMIAN VOJTEK

Working for "IBM Global Services Australia" as an engineer. Playing for Heidelberg Soccer Club. Married and a child on the way.

VILSON KNEZEVIC

Keeping fit and training every day. Preparing for pre-season training either local or abroad.

ADRIAN CAGALJ

I'm a personal trainer, and playing in the Victorian Premier League for Port Melbourne.



ROBBIE SLATER

Keeping busy. Working at Fox Sports covering the Premier League. Working at "Newington College" as a Sports Director. Working at the Nickelodeon Channel

VLADO ZORIC

Relaxing and waiting for opportunities to arrive.

AYTEC QENC

Working at Sydney United as the Head of Youth Development and as their media manager

JOE BACAK

Playing for St. Albans in the Victorian Premier League. Playing golf. Looking forward to some big nights out with Danny Tiatto.

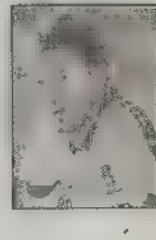


IVAN JOLIC

Playing in the Victorian Premier League for Whittlesea Stallions. Working and concentrating on a major project for the manufacturing engineering company I work for. Seeing friends I never got to see during my NSL career.

JOHN DIDULICA

Working for the PFA as a General Council. I've tried my hand at coaching (unsuccessfully) like all former players. Write a soccer column for the Geelong Advertiser.



WOLLONGONG ON THE INTERNATIONAL MAP

By Peter Damalas

The Wollongong Wolves Under 19s squad won many friends after a series of most impressive displays in the FIFA organised youth tournament recently concluded in France.

Competing against the likes of Wolverhampton Wanderers, Boavista and European powerhouse, Valencia, the southern coast outfit finished in third place, further evidence of the improvement of soccer in Australia at the grass roots level.

After heavy victories in the two friendlies prior to the tournament proper, Wollongong Wolves played out a goalless draw against French select side, Le Puy, in what coach Eddie Tesoro described as a rather nervous performance. Wollongong went on to record a 22-7 for and against goal tally in France.

"The players were certainly not overawed by the occasion. After the first game, the players took it upon themselves to improve, and we became quite a confident team. There are some very good quality players in this squad. The guys proved their worth and were getting better as the tournament progressed" Tesoro said.

The group of eighteen players endured a gruelling schedule on the way to the third-fourth-place play-off. The itinerary was packed with nine games in fifteen days, and according to Tesoro, approximately 800 km travelling from the north to the south of France.

"It was such a fantastic experience to be involved in one of three FIFA accredited youth club tournaments. We defeated the favourites Valencia, and we were congratulated by winners Wolverhampton, who have invited us for a second tournament next April, which will also include an American and an African team. It was great not just from the football perspective, and these young men were given the opportunity to experience the sights of a different culture. Their off field performance was very good" he said.

Such events have long been regarded as an important indicator of the status of a particular region. As a representative of

Australia and Oceania, the Wolves squad further enhanced the reputation of the footballing continent. Tesoro believes that Australian teams and players are capable of matching their European counterparts.

"These games were played at a very high level, but we are certainly right up there. We received many recommendations about how the team was organised in terms of tactics, and the physical and mental strengths of the players.

"Considering we are more of a physical team, it took a while to adjust. But the major difference is in training. While we usually conduct training three times a week, these professionals train everyday. The next level for us is definitely professionalism.

Also, European clubs are more fortunate because they are so close to where these tournaments are held" Tesoro said. Despite missing out on the finals series in both the senior and youth league competitions, the Wolves boast a number of players from the Under 19s whom Tesoro believes will form the backbone of the club in the future.

The likes of Matt Werasko, Nathan Able, Matthew Gordon, Lance Barrie, David Boscoscuro and defender Michael Blain, who was voted the most consistent player, have impressed on this tour.

Sydney United midfielder, Mile Jedinak, was a guest member of the squad, and was voted second best player in the tournament. His progress is being tracked by a number of French and Belgian clubs keen to use his defensive and attacking skills in the centre of the field. The club have implemented a unique system aimed at keeping the squad of home grown talent together as they emerge as footballers.

While two or three of the current crop of youngsters will move on next season, they will be replaced by members of the Under 17s in the hope of maintaining continuity in player and team development. "These guys are the stepping-stone for the club, and hopefully they will be recognised in the senior set up. I've had this group together for three years, some of them from the Under 12s, and they are



John Majurovski: Wolves youth star is certainly one for the future, and has also been nominated for player of the year in the Northern Youth League section at the Soccer Australia awards.

capable and committed

At this stage, it is not so much about winning championships, as it is about nurturing players through the system. One team may fluke it by spending a amount of dollars on new players, but they cannot

identify with the club.

"There is no trick to success. I am a sound believer in nurturing players through the youth system right up to the seniors. One of the strengths of French football is that each team have players who are born and bred in the area, and they attract crowds of forty to fifty thousand people" Tesoro said.

After a number of years at the club, Tesoro has put his hand up for the vacant senior coaching position vacated by championship winner, Ron Corry. Should he receive the post, Tesoro will be able to continue his coaching philosophy at the highest level.

"It is very exciting down in Wollongong at the moment. We have been put on the international map, and the players will benefit from the involvement in France" Tesoro said.

AWARDS:

Third Place Trophy.
FIFA Best Team Award.
FIFA Manager Award.
Second Best Player, Best Midfielder Award- Mile Jedinak.

RESULTS

Freindly:

Wollongong Wolves 5 Moissy 1
(Maurovski, Barrie, Gordon 2, Scherini).

15th May-Friendly

Wollongong Wolves 8 Bourget 1.

19th April

1st Game- Wollongong Wolves 0 Le Puy 0.

20th April

2nd Game- Wollongong Wolves 2 Wisla Krakow 0 (Jedinak, Barrie).

21st April

3rd Game- Wollongong Wolves, 1 Valencia 2 (Boscoscuro).

22nd April

Semi Final- Wollongong Wolves 0 Boavista Porto 1.

22nd April

3rd/4th Place Play Off- Wollongong Wolves 2 Valencia 1 (Gordon, Barrie).



A very proud Wolves Youth side here in France with their final tour game against Racing Club.



The squad that took part in the big youth tournament in France.

TOURING PARTY

Ben Jarman
Tynan Diaz
Lance Barrie
Nathan Abel
Tomislav Arcaba
Mile Jedinak
Ian Hall
Patrick Cappuccio
Michael Robinson
Ruben Zadkovich
Wade Scherini
John Majurovski
Michael Blain
David Boscoscuro
Matt Werasko
Matt Gordon
Phillip Weston
Caetano Lima
Eddie Tesoro (Coach)

NATIONAL SOCCER LEAGUE

Final Series Rd 9

No.	Team	GP	W	D	L	Streak	GF	GA	Pts
1	Perth Glory	9	8	0	1	W7	27	6	27
2	Olympic Sharks	9	3	1	5	L2	14	13	16
3	Adelaide City Force	9	4	2	3	D1	13	14	14
4	Parramatta Power	9	3	4	2	D2	15	18	13
5	Northern Spirit	8	2	2	4	D1	7	16	8
6	Newcastle United	8	1	1	6	W1	8	17	4

NORTHERN SPIRIT
NEWCASTLE UNITED

WASHED OUT

spirit
United

PLAYER OF THE WEEK



CLINT BOLTON
OLYMPIC SHARKS

Once again Olympic Sharks forward Clint Bolton proved that he is one valuable asset for the Cronulla-based side after pulling off a number crucial saves in his side's unfortunate loss to Perth Glory.

If it wasn't for Bolton, the scoreline could have increased.

His acrobatics kept the Blues in the game but the ball simply would not drop for the Olympic strikers thus all will be settled in Round 10 when they face the Power in an all out must win for last year's champions.

Bolton, a candidate for goalkeeper of the year will no doubt need to be at his best to keep out Power strikers John Buonavoglia and Pablo Cardozo at bay.

PARRAMATTA POWER

(A Elrich 58')

ADELAIDE CITY FORCE

(S Tunbridge 33')

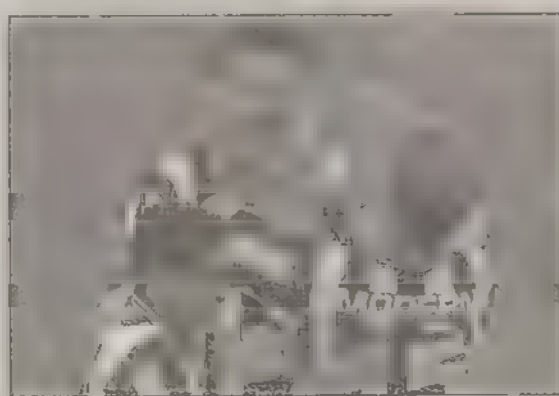
Referee: Mark Shield. Crowd: 2,573 Venue: Parramatta Stadium.
Teams: PARRAMATTA POWER: Vukovic, Ceccoli, Beauchamp, Thompson, O'Sullivan, Cardozo (Brownie 88), Brown (Renaud 70'), Seipapaidis (Zorbas 74'), O'Grady, Buonavoglia, Elrich.

Subs Not Used: Maione, Reddy (gk).

ADELAIDE CITY FORCE: Acevski, Fyle, Valkanis, Pellegrini, Pantelis, Veart, Smetz, Lozanovski, Tunbridge (Pellegrino 70'), Kemp (Budin 60'), Terminiello.

Subs Not Used: Lagati, Scarsella (gk).

Cautions: M Valkanis (ACF) 37, G Lozanovski (ACF) 58'



Force players celebrate Scott Tunbridge's goal against Parramatta Power last week.

PERTH GLORY

(D Mori 10')

OLYMPIC SHARKS

(J North 21')

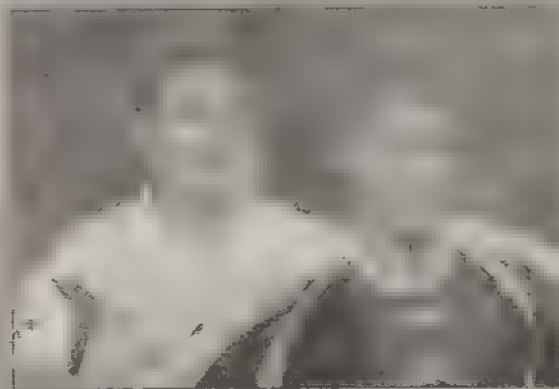
Referee: Simon McAleer. Crowd: 8,901 Venue: Perth Oval.
Teams: PERTH GLORY: Petkovic, Horsley, Harte, Haswell, Gumpert (Byrnes 77'), Miller, Despotovski (Carras 44'), Mori, Mrda (87'), Price, Colosimo, Tarka.

Subs Not Used: Danze, Matassa (gk).

OLYMPIC SHARKS: Bolton, Kohler, Junc, Sironi, Pondejak (Isrida 77'), Milicic, Halpin, North, Owens (Parisi 46'), Porter, Packer.

Subs Not Used: Souris, Durante, Hughes (gk).

Cautions: M Byrnes (PG) 92', J North (OS) 21', A Milicic (OS) 35'



Olympic's Jade North shown keeping Glory striker Damian Mori at bay during last week's crucial finals series match.

ROUND 10 - FINALS FIXTURES

Newcastle United - Perth Glory
Adelaide City Force - Northern Spirit
Olympic Sharks - Parramatta Power

LEADING GOALSCORERS

Name	Club	Total
DESPOTOVSKI Bobby	Perth Glory	12
MORI Damian	Perth Glory	7
M. CIC Ante	Olympic Sharks	6
PELOSI Claudio	Adelaide City Force	4
PARISI Franco	Olympic Sharks	3
SMETZ Shane	Adelaide City Force	3
CARDOZO Pablo	Parramatta Power	3
O'GRADY Paul	Parramatta Power	3

Perth Glory: 1 Olympic Sharks: 0



Glory have Championship in Sights

By Richard Kreider

Mich d'Avray remains resolute Perth Glory will meet the Olympic Sharks in the grand final for the second consecutive season, despite his side downing the defending champions 1-0 at a damp and slippery Perth Oval last Saturday night.

The gallant and gutsy victory, contested between arguably the two best sides in the country, and decided by first-half a long-range screamer from Damian Mori, was the perfect fillip for d'Avray and his charges, their seventh straight win, with only one more series match to play before the season's finale at Subiaco Oval.

It was a significant night in the history of the Perth club too, because the game was the last at Perth Oval as it currently stands, before the ground undergoes the first stage of reconstruction into a purpose-built rectangular stadium. The Oval will also be remembered for a successful Guinness Book of Records attempt at people dancing the Locomotion, where 1410 danced their way into the records books during last weekend's half-time interval - doubling the previous record.

Oddly enough, Glory's first opponents on that memorable October afternoon in 1996, was those of last weekend, where the visitors handed out a 4-1 National Soccer League lesson before a crowd of 9,639. It was, however, a different story this time around where the West Australians showed how far they have come in almost seven years of competition, even though just 8,904 attended this match on the weekend of the FA Cup final.

Bobby Despotovski and Scott Miller are the only two surviving players from that inaugural match, with Miller now on 199 Glory appearances after last Saturday and Despotovski not far behind on 185.

"It certainly wasn't pretty tonight

although ironically it is our last game at Perth Oval and our first time we played a (Perth) game in rain," said d'Avray on the constant drizzle that tried its utmost to spoil what is typically an enthralling contest between two giants in Australian football.

"It was effective and I'm pleased we came through the game without any suspensions or injuries - everyone has pulled up fine. We go to Newcastle next week but obviously, the first of June is on our minds," said the Glory boss.

As for Lee Sterrey, he remains confident his side will be returning to WA next month despite his side losing a fifth finals game in nine competed.

"It is disappointing, but if we play like that next week then we won't have a problem," said the Olympic coach.

"They put in a hell of a lot but again we got punished - to score a goal the way they did was pretty ordinary - where we should have set up a wall for a 35 yard free kick."

"I was really proud of the boys, but it's made more difficult when you are currently not on the right side of a bit of luck. We deserved to come back in the game at some stage in the second half."

Olympic will need to beat Parramatta Power in their last finals fixture if they are to secure back-to-back finals appearances, after the Power and third placed Adelaide Force drew 1-1 last Sunday. The Force play Northern Spirit and will qualify if the Sharks lose, or win against by three clear goals if the Olympic side draw.

One player who shone amongst all others for the visitors was a former Perth player, whose midfield mastery was only denied by Glory's unyielding defence.

"I don't normally mention individuals but if Troy Halpin wasn't the best player on the park, I must have been at a different ground," stated Sterrey.

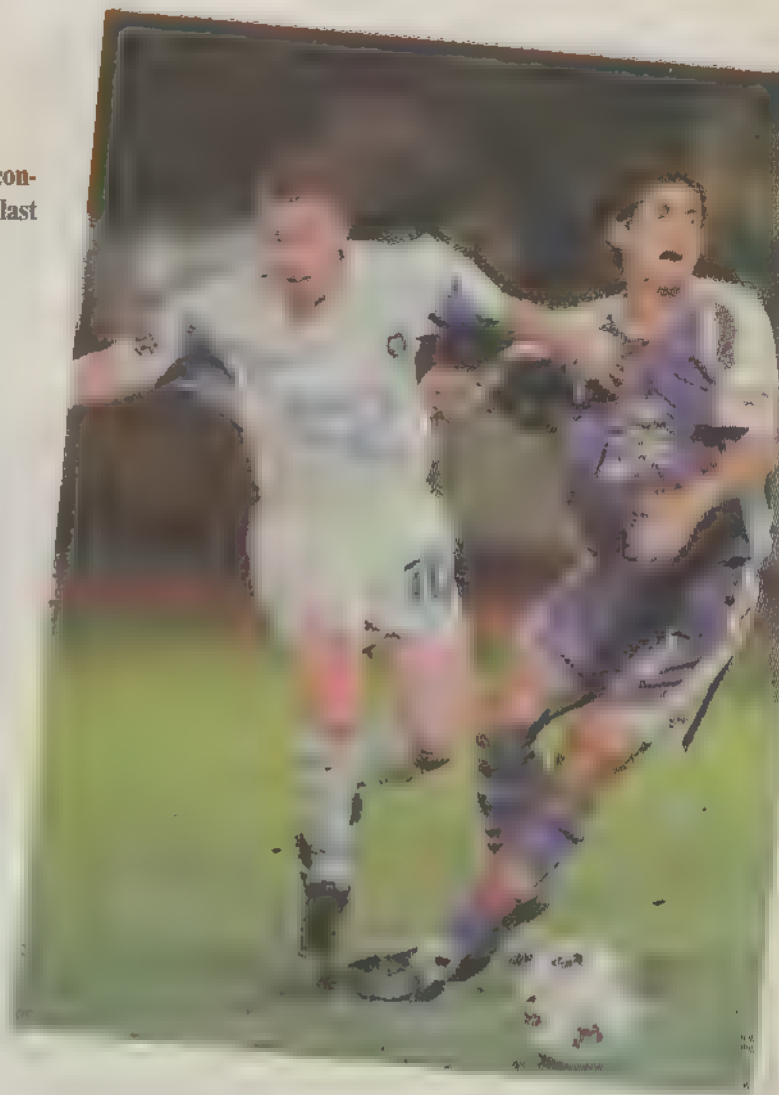
"He was sensational in midfield, I thought he run the whole show. He was elusive; his work-rate was magnificent and clipped over some really clever balls."

Of the Perth players that stood out, you couldn't go past the likes of goalkeeper Jason Petkovic who became just the second player in NSL history behind Bobby Catlin to have 100 clean sheets against his name.

Once again, the Goalkeeper of the Year nominee, along with the Sharks' Clint Bolton, was worth his weight in gold with a couple of crucial stops to deny the Sharks, although he was ably backed by rearguard associates in Matt Horsley, David Tarka, Jamie Harnwell and Shane Pryce, with the last two saying they will be leaving the club at the end of the season.

Since the game had greater significance for the Sydney club, they didn't waste any time launching themselves at their opponents. Tom Pondeljak especially, proved his nuisance value throughout the opening period, as did the lethal Ante Milicic.

But it was the home team that threatened to score first, when Mori was unlucky not to meet a Pryce centre with



Troy Halpin (left) shown challenging Simon Colosimo for the ball.

his head after just eight minutes. The NSL Player of the year candidate made up for it just two minutes later when Colosimo stabbed a free-kick into his run and before two Olympic players could intercept, the champion forward struck the ball with such venom, it cannoned off a couple of players before finding the back of the net. The outcome might have been different had the Sydney defence elected to put up a wall and Bolton not losing his footing in the soggy surface as he dived towards the oncoming missile.

Olympics response came three minutes later when Simon Colosimo, who had another masterful game from the 'middle-third', deflected a dangerous Greg Owens strike over the crossbar.

The Sharks retained authority for the next quarter of an hour, with Milicic blasting high and wide after 16 minutes, Porter shooting wide after 23 minutes, captain Ante Juric caught Petkovic by surprise with a tricky 29th minute ground strike that cannoned off Petkovic's gloves for a corner and Porter executed another testing shot four minutes further on.

Their best chance however, was squandered eight minutes before the break when a Juric chip into the Perth danger zone was met by Milicic on the six-yard line but his snap half-volley flew over the top bar, leaving the striker with his head in his hands.

The last of the first-half goalmouth

action was presented to Mori who struck again from long-range but his shot curled away from the target.

Olympic brought on U21 Player of the Year nominee Franco Parisi for the second period in place of Owens and immediately set about causing headaches for the Perth backline with his pace.

He even had decent chance on goal after 55 minutes, when after an impudent nutmeg and twist and turn; he released a curling grasscutter that Petkovic did well to palm around an upright for a corner.

It was Andrew Packer with his side's next opportunity after 74 minutes when he gathered a cleared Pondeljak free-kick on the edge of the box and returned it goalwards, but the Perth keeper gathered it cleanly.

Olympic kept up the pressure until the end of the game but although they had possession for long periods, they had clearly run out of ideas when it came to the finishing touch.

D'Avray put on his young substitutes for the remainder of the game, namely Adrian Caceres, Mark Bymes, who signed midweek for another season and Nick Mrdja. Sterrey put on Hiro Ishida for the last 15 minutes in an effort to add sting to the firing line but it was the same story when it came to cracking open Perth's rearguard.



Action shown between Bobby Despotovski (left) and Paul Kohler.

NSL Finals Series Round 9

Parramatta Power

Adelaide City Force

ROUND TEN - THE DECIDER!

By Peter Damalas

Three teams remain in the race for the second Grand Final berth after a combination of results this week failed to give the Olympic Sharks the points needed to secure second position.

Two of these hopefuls, Parramatta Power and Adelaide City Force played out a pulsating 1-1 draw at Parramatta Stadium on Sunday afternoon.

Despite playing the entire second period deeply entrenched in their own half, it was the away side who left Sydney the happier of the two teams, as they lie two points behind the Sharks with the final championship round to go. And they will be hoping that Sunday's opponents can end the defending champions hold on the title when they travel to Toyota Park on Sunday.

Should Adelaide City defeat Northern Spirit at home next week, as is expected, and Parramatta upset Olympic, it will be Zoran Matic's men who play Perth Glory on June 1.

But Parramatta were thrown a lifeline when Newcastle United, and then Perth, defeated Olympic on Monday and Saturday nights respectively. Ahmad Elrich scored the crucial equaliser in the 56th minute of this encounter to keep the Power's dreams alive. All hope seemed lost when the Northern Spirit scored a dramatic stoppage time equaliser last week, but Nick Theodorakopoulos knows that a two goal victory may be enough in the penultimate weekend of the 2002-2003 season.

After a week of unrelenting rain in Sydney, which saw the postponement of the Northern Spirit-Newcastle United fixture originally scheduled for Friday evening, the pitch came up rather well. Aided by the afternoon sun and the excellent drainage system, the ballplayers such as Lozanovski and O'Sullivan had little cause for complaint. However, few clear cut chances were fashioned in a rather scrappy opening quarter of an hour. A Pablo Cardozo volley was blocked in the penalty area, while

Goran Lozanovski could only screw a long range effort well wide of the post.

It was apparent from the onset that Parramatta were to use Elrich's speed at every opportunity. In the 18th minute, the forward lifted a pass over the defence into the path of O'Sullivan, who was challenged for the ball by the last defender on the edge of the area. Referee Mark Shield signalled play on as the supporters called for a penalty.

Zoran Matic adopted a defensive approach, and Adelaide City consistently had players behind the ball, with the striking duo of Tunbridge and Smeltz left up front for the odd counter-attack.

On a number of occasions, the defenders were forced to run with the ball away from their own goal to alleviate the pressure. Without the suspended playmaker Aurelio Vidmar and club captain, Ante Kovacevic, in the centre of the field, the away team were unable to hold up play in midfield.

Parramatta's eighteen year old goalkeeper Danny Vukovic, who replaced Liam Reddy, was forced into a diving save after a powerful run from Iain Fyfe saw him move from the edge of his own penalty area to deep inside the other half, where he unleashed a shot.

Adelaide's tactics stifled their opponents, and from a breakaway, Scott Tunbridge opened the scoring in the 33rd minute. The twenty year old was given enough space to turn, tee up and plant a left footed shot into the bottom corner of the net. The goal forced an immediate response from the home side, and Cardozo flashed wide from distance a minute later.

In stoppage time at the end of the first half, O'Grady and Buonavoglia were denied an equaliser when the efforts were blocked by some desperate defence. Cardozo sent the resultant free kick narrowly wide of the left hand post.

Sensing their season slipping away, Parramatta began the first half in their customary aggressive manner.

Damen Brown was causing problems on the left wing, and his cross eluded the boot of Matt Thompson, who had made a late run into the area. With replacement wing-back, Brendan Renaud warming up on the sidelines, Brown was aware that his time on



Goal-mouth action at its best between the Power and Force.

the field was almost up. His contribution to the equaliser was paramount, as his cross took out the goalkeeper and the defenders, before reaching Elrich on the far post, who controlled and blasted the ball into the roof of the net.

The goal sprung the home side into life as they placed their more experienced opponents under relentless pressure.

John Buonavoglia failed to capitalise on the chaos in the Force defence as his shot flew wide of the post, with goalkeeper Acevski out of position. Cardozo was pushed further forward to partner Buonavoglia, and his header in the 65th minute took a deflection for a corner.

Theodorakopoulos' men conspired to miss the remaining half chances in the match. Despite being willed on by a crowd of 2,573, the final

breakthrough did not arrive.

Adelaide City's defenders left the field an exhausted bunch, and their commitment to a realistic cause was epitomised throughout the match by Iain Fyfe. With five Grand Final appearances under their belt, the club are proven masters when it comes to upsetting the odds. The mantra "never write us off" will apply this week as Zoran Matic looks to guide his team to an unlikely date with destiny.

After a long campaign and an extended finals series, the results of Round 9 have ensured an exciting finale to the season. While the post season format for next season has yet to be decided, Soccer Australia will be pleased that the Championship series has produced a nailbiting conclusion.



Goran Lozanovski shown battling with Power's Brendan Renaud for the ball.



Scott Tunbridge shown celebrating his goal as young keeper Danny Vukovic watches on with disappointment.

from the dressing sheds

by Mark Stavroulakis



WHO WILL WIN SA'S AWARDS?

With the Logies well and truly over now, its that time of the year again - Soccer Australia have announced nominees for this years awards for outstanding achievement in field of football - the only problem is, a date and venue has yet to be set by Australia's governing body.

In regards to the awards themselves, the 'Warren' medal is obviously the one that stands tall amongst all other trophies on the day.

Who will be the Rove McManus of Australian soccer is the next question that should be asked?

This year sees Glory sharpshooter Damian Mori, Strikers star Fernando Rech, Newcastle striker Joel Griffiths and the Olympic duo of Ante Milicic and Tom Pondeljak slug it out for Australian soccer's main prize.

Many see this as a two-horse race with ABSW predicting that the award will be fought over Mori and Pondeljak.



Damian Mori: Punters have favoured the Glory striker to take out this year's Warren Medal.

It was unfortunate that Newcastle star Joel Griffiths suffered an injury setback during the year while last seasons Player of the Year Fernando Rech was simply not the same player in this campaign.

'Griffo' however will not be too disheartened if nothing goes his way after the 23-year-old signed a three-year deal with Swiss first division club Neuchatel Xamax.

Ante Milicic had his fair share in injuries as well leaving the door open for two likely winners.

ABSW Tip - Damian Mori to take out the coveted Warren Medal alongside yet another golden boot award.

One award that seems to get better as the years progress in the 'Papasavas Medal' for the Under 21 Player of Year.

Perth Glory's 'tank like' defender David Tarka, Marconi's silky striker Alex Brosque and super Olympic Sharks substitute Franco Parisi are all in the running for this award won by Newcastle United's Joe Schurripa last year.

This title is up for everyone with the trio having had a sterling season to date.

One huge statistic to come from this has been the fact that all three players were involved in the AIS set-up some years back - Yet another indication of the good work being done down in Canberra thanks to Steve 'Rocky' O'Connor.

ABSW Tip - Alex Brosque to win this one by an inch, only due to the fact that its been a long time since this reporter has seen a striker at his age mesmerise defences with his dazzling array of skill and precision.

Next award up is the goalkeeper of the year fought out between Newcastle's 'Brick Wall' Daniel Beltrame, Olympic Sharks' pin-up boy Clint Bolton and Perth Glory's Jason Petkovic.

'Petka' has won the award twice in his illustrious

career in the National League, which sets up again as a firm favourite to win this award.

However both Beltrame and Bolton had excellent seasons and will no doubt be more than a chance to win this one.

ABSW Tip - Against all odds, Big Daniel Beltrame to take this one out, as he really was a gem for Ian Crook's squad this year.

The announcement of 'Coach of the Year' has yet to be set with voting closing on the 27th of May.

National League players, Lawrie did his bit in making Spirit a force once more.

This might be a stern lesson to other clubs who forked out cash on both players and coaches that money doesn't buy success.

Other awards on the night will be in the National Youth League competitions for player of the year in both the Northern and Southern sections.

Also the Women's National Soccer League player of the year will be awarded.

photooftheweek



No love loss is shown between the two players from the NSW Premier League last week. The match between St George and Canterbury Marist was a hard fought affair.

Challenge - but the above photo displays the emotions that are present during the match. A great display of wrestling at its core.

Three possible candidates have however been pencilled up at ABSW's offices in Glebe with Spirit's Lawrie McKinna, Glory's Mich d'Avray and Newcastle's Ian Crook all possibly in a chance for nomination this year.

All three coaches have done extremely well in, guiding their respective clubs towards the top six



Lawrie McKinna could be rewarded for his great season with the Spirit with the award for Coach of the Year?

ABSW Tip - In a tough one, Lawrie McKinna to be named this year's coach of the year. Why you ask? Having been labelled as cellar dwellers from the start of the year due to their poor budget and lack of experienced players, McKinna managed to mould what he had in a side full of energy and vision.

Having used a number of young stars who made their debuts combining them with a couple of veteran

"F*** FOOTBALL"

Probably the most bizarre comment ever heard by a so-called professional footballer was in the headlines last week in the English Press.

Former Soccerroo goalkeeper Mark Bosnich, banned for nine-months from the game has thought of a new career move and no it's not playing football.

Even though two English Premier League clubs have been linked towards signing 'Bozza' for next year, the former Man Utd star stated that he wants to try and make it as a sports star in America.

"I don't really give a toss about football anymore. F*** football. I have had enough. I want to try and make it as a sports star in America."

This ranting reporter suggests that Bozza will make his comeback on the wrestling circuit, namely WWE. Look out Goldberg - Bozza's Next!



Could this be a match made in heaven? WWE Star Goldberg taking on our very own Mark Bosnich?

GRELLA - EMPOLI'S AUSSIE STAR

Vince Grella has certainly had a season he'll never forget this year with Serie A side Empoli.

The former Carlton lad rose up to the occasion this year and took part in almost every match to grab a number of clubs attention when the transfer market re-opens for next season.

Grella's impact at the club has been rather significant not only on the pitch, but off it as well.

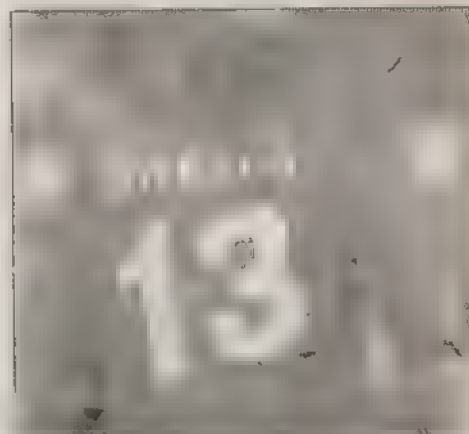
It was pleasing to hear that the entire town in Empoli has embraced the Aussie with open arms.

Songs have been named in honour of Vincenzo, even billboards and posters of Kangaroos have been sighted at Empoli's home matches.

If you want more proof on how popular this future star has become log onto Empoli's website and click on the menu bar stating 'Shop'.

Once your in there, four jerseys with names appear from the entire squad and low and behold, one of the four is our very own Grella.

Just to prove to you that this is no joke, below is the photo they've used to promote Grella's famous number 13 kit.



Vince Grella's famous number 13 jersey.

TEAM MILESTONE

Northern Spirit played its 150th NSL match last Friday night when it took on Newcastle United at North Sydney Oval. The first NSL match played by the Spirit was on 9 October 1998 - 0-2 loss to the Olympic Sharks at North Sydney Oval.

VENUE MILESTONE

Last Sunday's Parramatta Power-Adelaide City Force match was the 100th NSL match played at Parramatta Stadium. The western Sydney venue has hosted NSL matches since it was constructed in 1986, its first match being the 1986 Northern Division Grand Final where Olympic defeated St George 3-2 in extra time.

GREEK GIANTS TO TOUR AUSTRALIA?

Some news that will really get the Greeks going in Australia was the rumours that glamour Greek side Olympiakos could be set to tour Sydney and Melbourne during their off-season break in the next few months.

Clearly speculation, Greece's renowned 'Red Devils' are currently on course of winning their seventh consecutive title in a row!!!

Stay tuned for more information on this issue in coming weeks.

STARS TO GATHER AT KNIGHT OF NIGHTS

To celebrate Melbourne Knights' 50th year anniversary, the club is holding a special dinner at the wonderful Flemington Racecourse.

Former Knights stars Mark Viduka and Danny Tiatto have already been pencilled in as special guests on the night while Joe Simunic has also been targeted.

A night that will surely be one not to miss out on



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NSW PREMIER LEAGUE 2002/03 FINALS SERIES MAJOR SEMI-FINAL

Blacktown City Demons

1

A.P.I.A.-Leichhardt Tigers

2

By Paul Goodwin

A.P.I.A. Leichhardt shocked their rivals Blacktown City Demons with a powerhouse display on a surprisingly lush green top pitch at the Gabbie Stadium on Saturday night.

Two goals from former Demon Damon Langan were enough to bring the Tigers a victory. Right from the opening whistle, the visitors stormed forward in attack, committed to a positive style of play.

Sporting a new formation carefully contrived by coach Les De Celis, A.P.I.A. took the game to their opponents and reaped the rewards.

They were devastating on the flanks, especially down the right, where Sam Larocca was outstanding.

Their defence was nowhere near as fully tested as it had been a week earlier against Bonnyrigg and much of that was due to the drive of the midfield going forward and a Blacktown outfit.

Blacktown keeper John Crawley did as much as anyone to prevent a rout with a string of first half saves.

While opposite number Bob Catlin was caught out on a cross that allowed the Blacktown side to get a sniff of a comeback in the second half, it was an uncharacteristic blunder by the big man and the set piece goal proved to be the only real threat.

At the other end of the park, the A.P.I.A. front runners, Zlatko Arambasic in particular, frittered away chance after chance when well placed.

Talking about the game after the final whistle had blown A.P.I.A. mentor De Celis commented:

"We should have won by eight or nine! We have now beaten Blacktown and Bonnyrigg twice this season and it shows how we have been under-achieving by finishing second."

He admitted to changing many things tactically before the game, but it was the impact of Larocca and the sharper form of Norman Tome in the first half that really stood out.

In the end it was Langan's pair of well-taken goals which settled the issue.

Langan was getting forward whenever possible, as were most of his teammates, to pin Blacktown back in their own half and the attacking policy paid huge dividends.

It provided excellent entertainment for a crowd delighted to see some football at all on such a wet weekend, after a Sydney wide drenching all week.

De Celis knew his team had little to fear having already beaten Blacktown once at The Gabbie, a ground the Demons themselves find hard to win on against many of their opponents for some reason.

"We played much better today than we did when we won 3-1 here three months ago. We were sensational!"

But De Celis and his team were quick to play down the importance of the win. As one team member, Joe Moric commented, "this was great, but it was not the Grand Final. That is the one that counts!"

This game had all the hallmarks of a Grand Final.

After first-half exchanges at both ends with both keepers shining and Ante Moric prominent for A.P.I.A., Blacktown keeper Crawley pulled off a miracle save in the 16th minute.

Larocca and Arambasic combined down the right with the latter getting on the end of a cross and producing a nice angled shot that the keeper saw late and pushed wide for a corner.

Catlin similarly excelled in the 17th when he raced off his line to the edge of his area to dive at the feet of Luke Roodenburg who had seized on a stray pass from Joe Moric to bear down on the A.P.I.A. goal with menace.

A cross from the left by Ante Moric gave Arambasic another chance to shine in the 23rd but the deep cross again was again to no avail.

Then a minute later came the breakthrough A.P.I.A. deserved for their enterprise.

Larocca got away down the left this time and sent over a very deep cross which was met by captain and former Demon, Damon Langan.

His volley from the edge of the penalty area, out wide on the right, simply flew into the top corner, giving



Dion Valle (left) and Zlatko Arambasic both keep their eyes on the ball.

Crawley no chance

Coming on top of his first goal the previous week, and this time against his old club, it was a sweet, sweet goal for the popular defender.

In the 31st A.P.I.A. continued their high intensity assault and Tome, much more involved here than of late, got through to face Crawley, who saved with his feet and then saw Arambasic fire wide from the rebound.

Arambasic also headed wide moments later from yet another Larocca cross.

Paul Dee and Larocca were blending beautifully on the right, but both got involved in most of the attacks. Larocca appearing to have the freer role of the pair.

Then in the 37th A.P.I.A.'s persistence paid off yet again.

Larocca got into the area on the right from a crisp Tome pass only to clash with Demons flanker Jimmy Nikas.

Much was made of whether the infringement was inside or outside the area but after consulting his assistant, referee Nick Asargiotis quickly pointed to the spot.

Arambasic may have scored the most recent penalty awarded to the Tigers but only one man was interested here: Langan of course!

His crafty penalty kick deceived Crawley and we had A.P.I.A. two goals up less than 40 minutes into the game and a Demons side that looked well below their best and seemingly incapable of answering A.P.I.A.'s bombardment.

There was more A.P.I.A. attack of note in a first half they clearly dominated.

In the 42nd minute Arambasic got on the end of a good ball in from Paul Dee. He marched into the area to confront Crawley but the Demons' skipper once again was able to thwart him and save well with his legs.

Crawley needed to advance well off his line again to deny Tome after Marcus Stergiopoulos had run through the heart of the Demons' defence to set up the opportunity.

Blacktown began to get moving now but their finishing was woeful and they seemed to lack that final pass

once near goal, a fact that coach Brian Brown was exasperated about when speaking after the game.

"We were awful today" he admitted. "Our passing was dreadful all day."

And so it was that the only goal the Demons could manage came from a corner.

It came in the 66th after a sustained period of pressure.

Simon Catanzaro put over a very deep cross that Catlin appeared to lose completely - he said afterwards that he had lost it in the lights, but he was not wearing his dark eye shadow on this occasion! - and when the loose ball fell at the feet of Naoki Imaya he was able to bundle it over the line.

Meanwhile A.P.I.A. continued to go forward whenever they could and almost made it three in the 72nd. Larocca was able to get to the edge of the box in the centre and put James Stubbs-Mills through on goal.

A heavy challenge by Crawley saw the ball spin wildly towards goal where it clipped the left post before being cleared to safety.

In the 89th A.P.I.A. escaped a late equaliser from Blacktown when Dione Valle's header was cleared off the A.P.I.A. line, Catlin getting his body in the way first, though, in truth, he knew little about it.

Had Blacktown scored and taken the game into extra time it would have been an injustice as A.P.I.A. was clearly dominant.

The final word for Brian Brown

"Nothing that A.P.I.A. did caught us by surprise at all. We just played badly."

"Not sure if it was having the week off, but I doubt it. We need to have a look at ourselves after that performance."

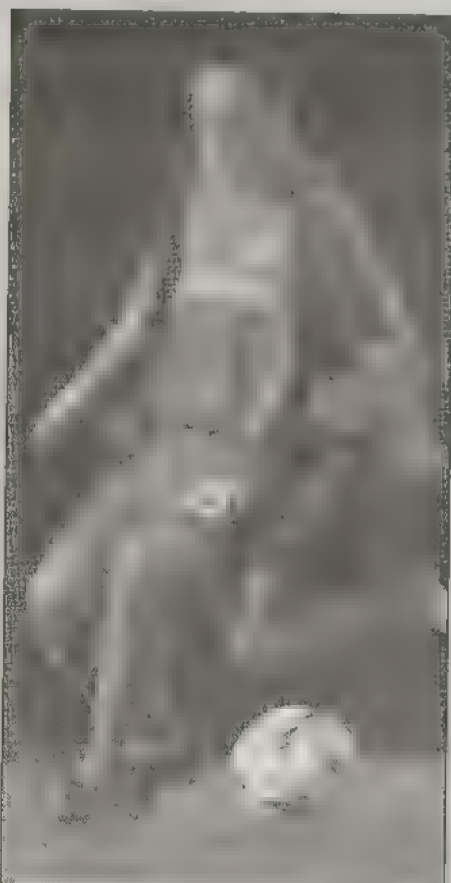
So now it is A.P.I.A. which has the week off and the Demons who will need to overcome another hurdle if their season is not to end a week early.

BLACKTOWN CITY DEMONS 1
(N Imaya 66')
A.P.I.A.-LEICHHARDT TIGERS 2
(D Langan 24', 37' pen)
at Gabbie Stadium, Seven Hills
Saturday 27th May, 5.00pm

BLACKTOWN CITY DEMONS: 1 John Crawley (C) 3 Damien Foxe, 5 Ben Wilard, 8 Dione Valle, 6 David Reid, 7 Simon Catanzaro, 9 Kain Rastall, 10 Naoki Imaya, 11 Jimmy Nikas, 18 Colin Luff, 4 Luke Roodenburg
Subs not used: 2 Dane Holkin, 15 Patrick Galt, 19 Steve Riches, 20 Matthew Burrows (RGK)
Coach: Brian Brown

A.P.I.A.-LEICHHARDT TIGERS: 1 Bob Catlin, 17 Paul Dee, 3 Josip Moric, 15 Damon Langan (C), 16 Tony Tesoro, 18 Ante Moric, 5 Marcus Stergiopoulos, 7 Sam La Rocca, 8 James Stubbs-Mills (6 Michael Galluzzo 90), 13 Norman Tome (12 Jeremy Brown 74), 9 Zlatko Arambasic
Sub not used: 14 John Paul Boutros, 11 Ryan Jones, 10 Steve Karavalakis
Coach: Les De Celis

Referee: Nick Asargiotis
Assistant Referees: David Finlay and Atla Stibinga
Fourth Official: Terry Goodfellow
Cautions: A.P.A. Leichhardt: Sam Larocca 20, Paul Dee 46, Blacktown City: Dione Valle 32, Luke Roodenburg 38, Jim Nikas 82.



A double from Damon Langan settled the issue at the Gabbie.

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NSW PREMIER LEAGUE 2002/2003 FINALS SERIES

MINOR SEMI-FINAL

Bonnyrigg White Eagles	2
Belconnen Blue Devils	0

By Greg Stock

Bonnyrigg White Eagles moved to within one game of yet another Grand Final appearance when they disposed of a plucky Belconnen in the Minor Semi-Final at Gabbie Stadium on Sunday afternoon.

Two goals inside the first twenty-five minutes setting up the win, but not before a second half send off and some poor defending had all but handed the advantage back to the visitors.

"We were much better than Belconnen in the first half and played some excellent soccer" said Bonnyrigg coach Ljube Jancev at the post-match media conference. Dominating the first half-hour of the game, Belconnen were unable to match their opponents for intensity as the White Eagles cut loose.

Kindness Agwu and Michael Hawrysiuk causing no end of problems, as they manufactured two great goals from quick counter attacks. Goal number one came from Shane Knight who got a smart deflection on a Kindness Agwu drive after a great run and cross from Hawrysiuk down the right hand touch-line.

Goal number two coming ten minutes after the first when the out of form Aaron Burgess was left unmarked at the backpost to neatly slot away a deft flick on from Knight after a long throw from that

man again, Michael Hawrysiuk.

At 2-0 up the game was seemingly over, but to their credit Belconnen fought back strongly in a controversial second half, which saw the dismissal of Bonnyrigg defender Askin Oygur. Booked early in the second half for a clumsy challenge the White Eagles were forced to battle away with ten men for the final twenty minutes when he was again booked for what seemed like a deliberate handball.

Their 2-0 lead didn't seem enough as the Blue Devils camped themselves inside their opponents half for the later part of the game, only problem was, they couldn't convert possession into goals.

A shadow of the side they were in the first half, Bonnyrigg played into their hands, enduring some anxious moments as Fernando Greco pulled off some marvelous saves to keep them in the game.

"After we lost Askin Oygur we struggled and Belconnen used their advantage well," said Jancev.

"We were lucky not to concede at least one goal but we hung in there and I was very proud with what we did as a team."

The turning point coming five minutes from the end when a free kick just outside the area was smashed by Michael Katz to the right of Greco, only for the big goalkeeper to fall the wrong way and save the shot with an outstretched foot.

Blue Devils goalkeeper Anthony Giannasca was replaced at half-time after injuring his shoulder late in the first half, his replacement Francois Bangwani



Pellegrino and Greco — the two Fernando's — lay their bodies on the line in defence for Bonnyrigg.

was solid but with the ball down the other end, didn't really have much to do. The old adage 'a game of two halves' clearly evident with Belconnen dominating the second half but unable to score, blowing a succession of chances from well inside their opponents penalty box. The clubs leading scorer Daniel Macor failed to produce under

close marking, their best chances falling to substitute Clinton Larfield and midfielder Stewart Camara, Larfield having a shot in a goalmouth scramble cleared off the line in a goalmouth scramble in the 63rd minute. For the second successive season, the Blue Devils unable to get themselves past an early elimination in the Minor Semi-Final.



Bonnyrigg celebrates the winner over Belconnen.

BONNYRIGG WHITE EAGLES2
(S Knights 15, A Burgess 25)

BELCONNEN BLUE DEVILS0
at Gabbie Stadium, Seven Hills

BONNYRIGG WHITE EAGLES: 1 Fernando Greco, 3 Mark D'Alessandro, 5 Tayfun Devrimol, 6 Bobby Dragas, 9 Shane Knight, 7 Javier Mancino 80', 10 Kindness Agwu (8 David Harding 49'), 15 Askin Oygur, 16 Michael Hawrysiuk (12 Zlatko Donev 8'), 18 Fernando Pellegrino, 21 Aaron Burgess, 23 Devrim Huseyin Coach: Ljube Jancev
Subs Not Used: 11 Joe Bruni, 66 Alexio Augusto

BELCONNEN BLUE DEVILS: 1 Anthony Giannasca (31 Francois Bangwani 46'), 2 Adrian Dowling, 5 Oscar Zamora, 7 Michael Katz, 8 Elliot Zwagobani, 10 Daniel Macor, 11 David Arranz (18 Andy Rakic 64'), 13 Stewart Camara, 15 Matthew Vain (9 Clinton Larfield 55'), 17 Stephen Kemp, 25 Nic Furdue
Coach: Lino Fiorese
Subs Not Used: 19 Daniel Camara, 3 Ian Waldon

Cautions: Arranz (bel) 40' Oygur (bwe) 57' 70' Larfield (bel) 77'
Red Card: Oygur (bwe) 70'
Referee: Mark Hester
Assistant Referees: Michael Johnson and David Bradshaw
Fourth Official: Keith Anderson



SOCCER NSW



NSW PREMIER LEAGUE 2002/2003 FINALS SERIES

Blacktown City Demons	4
Rockdale City Suns	2

By Paul Goodwin

Blacktown City Demons fans had something to cheer about at last when their Under 19 side accounted for Rockdale City Suns 4-2 in the late game at The Gabbie.

Racing to a 3-0 lead before the break the Demons withstood a second half rally by the plucky visitors who managed to pull two goals back before Blacktown could put the game beyond their reach with a fourth goal late in the game.

Lee Newton was the star for Blacktown with two fine goals. His partnership with Dean Storey was lethal and the pair tore Rockdale to shreds in the first half and appeared to be showing no mercy.

After just failing to reach a 5th minute cross from the right by Adam Mansueti, Newton grabbed the goal Blacktown had been promising when he arrived in the tenth minute to steer home from close range.

Newton was able to slide in to score at the far post after a ball had skidded off the head of a defender following a

cross from the right.

Newton then had an easy tap - in three minutes later after first hitting his shot less than cleanly and needing to follow it up.

Newton probably should have had his third in the 15th minute, but after Dean Storey had sidestepped a defender and set up the chance Rockdale keeper Phillip Zabaks was smart enough to come out to snatch the ball from Newton's bootlages. The goal of the game came in the 30th minute from former Derby County trialist Storey, who let fly from 25 yards and found the top corner with a great volley.

Shannon Coles 45th minute effort for Rockdale that was tipped over by Nik Jelcic signalled the start of the Suns revival. They came out for the second half breathing fire.

After absorbing further Blacktown pressure Rockdale fashioned their first goal, following some sustained pressure in the 66th minute.

Okenadie Costine found room down the left and got to the byline before cutting the ball back for Eban Luland to tuck away from close range.

Then from a free kick in the 67th, floated in from the



Lee Newton celebrates another Demons goal.

left by Cole, John Velegrinis, who ran all day and certainly deserved his reward, was able to finish nicely at the near post to make it 3-2.

Rockdale showed a lot of grit to come back and not a little enterprise. They will make it hard for Bonnyrigg next weekend but these two quality sides should serve up some good football whatever the outcome.

BLACKTOWN CITY DEMONS 4
(L Newton 9, 13, D Storey 29, G Littlebury 83)
ROCKDALE CITY SUNS 2
(R Todorovski 65, J Velegrinis 67)

BLACKTOWN CITY DEMONS: 20 Nick Jelic (C), 18 Roger Gaudry, 27 Kane Caruthers, 74, 22 Paul Karbon, 23 Tyler Simpson, 25 Glenn Littlebury, 28 Jordan Simpson, 34 Michael Wood, 39 Dean Storey, 31 Adam Mansueti, 32 Gehan Loke, 35 Bran Vanaga, 35 Lee Newton.
Subs not used: 1 Anthony Pison, 26 Michael Arcuri, 40 Matthew Burrows (RGK).
ROCKDALE CITY SUNS: 1 Phillip Zabaks, 2 Peter Makarovski, 3 Steven Costine, 4 Sasha Stevoski, 13 Eban Luland, 40, 5 Steven Sijak, 6 George Nadevski, 17 Richard Lente, 58, 8 Rob Todorovski, 9 John Velegrinis, 10 Shannon Cole, 15 Glen O'Connor, 11 Balazs Mite, 14 Chris Jurevska, 25.
Subs not used: 7 Danny Nastovski, 15 Alex Trajovski.
Coach: Brian Brown.
Referee: Terry Goodnow.
Assistant Referees: David Finlay and Anita Stibinger.
Cautions: Blacktown City N, Rockdale City Sasha Stevoski 12.

A.P.I.A.-Leichhardt Tigers	1
Bonnyrigg White Eagles	2

By Paul Goodwin

Bonnyrigg and A.P.I.A. turned on some sparkling entertainment for the supporters who had stuck around after the exciting first grade game had been completed at The Gabbie on Sunday night.

White Bonnyrigg were to prove worthy 2-1 winners the old adage that it takes two good teams to make a good match was never truer, as both sides played their best football to make it a splendid contest.

The winner came late in the game, but not before A.P.I.A. had drawn level and looked more than capable of forcing the game into extra time.

The quality of the football was befitting of a first grade match and there were a number of star performers on show, including both young keepers.

Probably the stand out in a game littered with stars was Bonnyrigg striker Dejan Malenica whose mobility, fighting spirit, ball skills, vision and passing ability

earned him the plaudits of the crowd.

In being substituted late in the game he was only coming off early to accept the praise he deserved for his part in an epic encounter.

The keepers from both sides made multiple saves to keep the scoreline down to 2-1 with Alexio Augusto for Bonnyrigg in the thick of the second half action and performing near miracles to tip shot after shot from the eager A.P.I.A. strikers over the bar.

At the other end Luke Femia was similarly effective, though much of his good work had come before the break.

He nearly got caught out by a spectacular lob from 40 yards by Dalibor Drca that he raced back to tip over the bar, but A.P.I.A. had chances too in the first period.

A tricky angle beat Rocky Restuccia in the 11th minute when he found himself free on the left with the goal gaping in front of him.

Alexio had tipped over a Ross Kethel header near the end of the half, but the best football was to follow after the break.

A.P.I.A. took a surprise lead just five minutes into the second half. Bonnyrigg had looked the better side after the first 45 minutes and began the second period as they had ended the first, on top.

But Bonnyrigg had not allowed for A.P.I.A.'s Marino Musemici and their keeper had certainly not expected a looping header to creep under his crossbar, neither had the crowd, who were as surprised as the rest to see the ball dip late and creep in.

Bonnyrigg responded within five minutes, however, with an equaliser.

A through pass found Drca running into space and the lively striker was able to tuck his shot under the body of the exposed keeper to make it 1-1 in the 55th minute.

There were to be more heroics from Alexio who saved from Michael Dowling in the 66th and Sam Yilmaz in the 67th but the White Eagles came back to win the game with a beauty in the 75th.

Micky Simonovic and Alex Canak combined to set up another goal for Drca who was on the line to steer the ball past Femia after the shot from Simonovic had first been blocked.

A rapid fire series of shots in the 78th by A.P.I.A. was beaten away frantically by the Bonnyrigg defence which had been under siege in the last passages of play.

Further saves by Femia from Malenica, Canak and Nikola Nacovski all made the finish more dramatic and left the crowd well satisfied with an outstanding match to

talk about on the way home and maybe a lot longer than that.

A.P.I.A.-LEICHHARDT TIGERS 1
(M Musemici 50)
BONNYRIGG WHITE EAGLES 2
(D Drca 55, 75)

A.P.I.A.-LEICHHARDT TIGERS: 30 Luke Femia, 31 Gregor Agic, 33 Nathan Moulds, 44 Melissa Chahine, 47 Marino Musemici, 32 Chris Andrews, 89, 37 Matthew Radu, 45 Sam Yilmaz, 47 Peter Walker, 40, 85, 35 Michael Dowling, 116 Tony Pannuccio, 85, 27 Ross Kethel, 39 Rocky Restuccia, 16 Carlo Musemici, 30, 49 Robert Youngs, 46 Tony Pannuccio.
Subs not used: 38 Matthew Lekovski.

BONNYRIGG WHITE EAGLES: 1 Alexio Augusto, 2 George Radmanovic, 3 Marjan Novotni, 5 Dalibor Drca, 6 Dejan Malenica, 16 Andrew Jallaby, 85, 7 Steven Nedic, 9 Nikola Zoric, 17 Alex Canak, 18 Miroslav Simonovic, 19 Nikola Nacovski, 21 Dalibor Drca.
Subs not used: Darko Guleski (RGK), 15 Aron Abraham.
Referee: Keith Anderson.

Assistant Referee: Michael Johnson and David Bradshaw.
Cautions: A.P.I.A. Leichhardt, Robert Youngs, 18 Gregor Agic, 43 Nathan Moulds, 58 Bonnyrigg, George Radmanovic, 23.

NSW PREMIER LEAGUE 2002/03 FINAL SERIES

MAJOR SEMI-FINAL

FIRST GRADE

Blacktown City Demons 1	A.P.I.A.-Leichhardt Tigers 2
(N Ilyama 66')	(D Langan 24', 37'(pen))

GRADE 19

Blacktown City Demons 4	Rockdale City Suns 2
(L Newton 9/13', D Storey 29', G Littlebury 83')	(R Todorovski 65', J Velegrinis 67')

MINOR SEMI-FINAL

FIRST GRADE

Bonnyrigg White Eagles 2	Belconnen Blue Devils 0
(S Knights 15', A Burgess 28')	

GRADE 19

A.P.I.A.-Leichhardt Tigers 1	Bonnyrigg White Eagles 2
(M Musemici 50')	(D Drca 55/75')

NSW PREMIER LEAGUE 2002/03 FINALS SERIES

PRELIMINARY FINAL

FIRST GRADE

HOME TEAM	AWAY TEAM	DATE	KICK-OFF	GROUND
Blacktown City Demons - v	Bonnyrigg White Eagles	Sat 24 May	6:00pm	Gabbie Stadium

UNDER 19

HOME TEAM	AWAY TEAM	DATE	KICK-OFF	GROUND
Rockdale City Suns - v	Bonnyrigg White Eagles	Sat 24th May	3:30pm	Gabbie Stadium



SOCCER NSW



NSW PREMIER LEAGUE 2002/03 FINALS SERIES

PRELIMINARY FINAL

By Greg Stock

First there were five, now we are down to the final three and at the end of ninety minutes this week, there will be just two.

For many pundits, the mere thought that it would be any other side than Blacktown City as first into the Grand Final seemed preposterous, but here we are looking at A.P.I.A.-Leichhardt with the all-important spot and Blacktown fighting for their very survival against their old foe Bonnyrigg. So what happened? What went wrong last weekend?

"We were just ordinary" said Demons coach



Naoki Imai had a strong game against A.P.I.A.-Leichhardt.



Blacktown City Demons VS Bonnyrigg White Eagles



Saturday 24th May - 6.30pm
Gabbie Stadium, Seven Hills

Brian Brown. "Pure and simple we were ordinary, well below our best and it showed." The week off clearly affected the side as they struggled to mount any significant pressure allowing A.P.I.A. to dictate terms. "Clearly it wasn't the result we would have wanted, but now we have our backs to the wall and there will be no excuses next week."

The worrying aspect for Blacktown is that they look like they are in the midst of a slump and at the business end of the season. One win from their past four starts has left them in this precarious position, losses to Bonnyrigg and Rockdale in the regular season and against A.P.I.A. last weekend, their only win in the last month against the Central Coast in round twenty-one.

Playing their best eleven last week, Brown is widely tipped to shake his charges up during training this week, but expected to start with the same side in the hope that their old form will return.

Bonnyrigg produced one of the best half-hours of football seen this year when they opened up Belconnen like a can of worms last Sunday to race to a 2-0 lead. For their army of fans they never looked likely in the second half and coughed and spluttered their way through the last twenty minutes to take the victory. Despite the negative second half, coach Ljube Jancev was happy with his sides endeavor and looking forward to the clash with Blacktown.

"Our second half wasn't as good as our first" said Jancev, "but Belconnen are a good team and

they really made a game of it whereas we didn't. We lacked a little bite in our midfield and while things were going well in the first half it did become a struggle for us as times." But that was last week and this week is a new game and a clean slate, the main question being will Jancev elect to try and blow Blacktown off the park inside the first half hour or play a more controlled game?

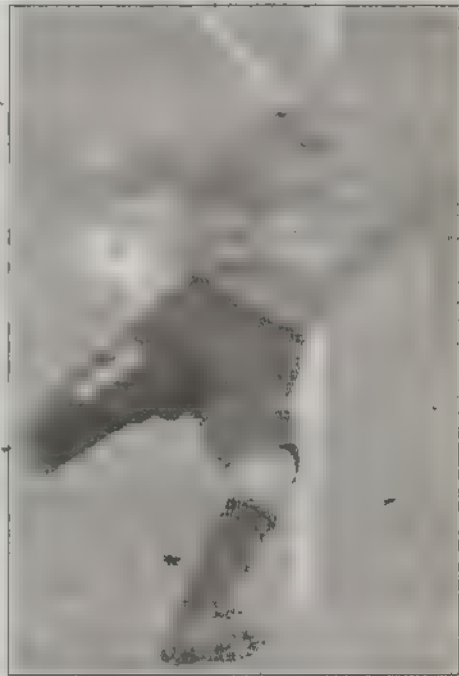
"Our gameplan is always to be attacking and I can't see that changing this week. We have a great deal of respect for Blacktown, they are a very good team and will be hard to beat, but I back my side to take the game right to them and see if they can respond."

On the injury front, Jancev will face an anxious week with Kindess Agwu (shoulder) and Javier Mancino (leg) causing the most concern. He will have to make one change with Askin Oygur out suspended and could hand a starting spot to either David Harding in a defensive midfield role, or Joe Brum as an attacking midfielder and switch Tayfun Devrimol back to stopper.

On paper these two sides match up very evenly and it could be the bounce of the ball or a touch of luck that gets one side over the line. In their two meetings this season, Blacktown beat Bonnyrigg at Gabbie Stadium 3-1 in round one, but the White Eagles exacted revenge in round two by the narrowest of margins 1-0. In their eleven previous Semi-Final meetings the honours are split, the Demons having won 6, the White Eagles 5,

Blacktown having scored 20 goals, Bonnyrigg 16. Looking at their recent record Blacktown have dropped three of their last four games and do look shaky while Bonnyrigg have lost just one of their last seven against A.P.I.A. two weekends back and won four of their last six.

Formbooks aside this does look a tough game to find a winner. Can Bonnyrigg come out of the blocks quickly and set up a lead? Can the Demons hold them and use Roodenberg and Luff at the other end? There are many questions to be answered. Putting last week down to an aberration, I'll go out on a limb and tip the favourites Blacktown to win, but not before we have seen one of the most absorbing Semi Final contests in recent years.



Former Blacktown player Fernando Greco is in good form for the White Eagles.

FROM THE SIDELINES By Greg Stock

*The wet weather certainly had an impact on last weekend's soccer fixtures with over 6,000 organised matches in the Greater Sydney area cancelled. Games from as far away as the Central Coast, Nepean and Illawarra all fell by the wayside, the only matches in town at Gabbie Stadium on Saturday night and Sunday afternoon. With the pitch in near perfect condition, we saw two excellent games of Premier League football, well worthy of Semi-Final status.

*Hardworking Federation competition manager Graham Crawhall has his new replacement starting work this week, the successful candidate none other than Panthers lower grade coach Greg McGriskin. A schoolteacher by profession, McGriskin starts work this week, with his predecessor expected to stay around a few more weeks yet to help him learn the ropes.

*While Bonnyrigg are now within one game of a coveted Grand Final berth, spare a thought for midfielder Rob Angieviski. The dynamic midfielder was badly injured in the Preliminary Semi-Final after coming off the bench in the second half, the injury diagnosed as a torn cruciate ligament. Angieviski underwent surgery late last week and is expected to be out for between 6 and 8 months.

*Congratulations to A.P.I.A.-Leichhardt on their win in the Major Semi-Final last Saturday evening, confirming them as the first team into the NSW Premier League Grand Final. Coach Les De Celis is not letting the grass grow under his feet, organising a night off for his side this Tuesday from the trials and tribulations of a normal training session. Instead De Celis will take his team ten-pin bowling ahead of a busy weeks with the players focus on the lanes rather

than the pitch this week. Already a number of the A.P.I.A. side has staked a claim to who will be the one to beat, 'Slammin' Sam Larocca has been talking up his chances, as does Steve 'pin kuller' Karavatakis who 'From the Sidelines' believes has had some previous bowling experience at what he describes a 'higher' level. The quiet money



however is on Bobby Catlin, with one A.P.I.A. player, who prefers to remain nameless stating that "Bobby has a great head for bowling and should be very tough to beat." What that means we are not sure, but nevertheless

it should be a great night - results to be posted in this column next week.

*Speaking of things A.P.I.A., it has certainly been a long time between drinks for the Tigers, when the whistle does blow next Saturday week it will be their first NSW State League Grand Final in 27 years. Despite enjoy-

ing some success in the National Soccer League, the last time they played in the State League season decider was 1976, when they beat St. George 1-0! For those interested the side that day featured; David McGuire, Bob

McGinn, Ken Jenkins, Willie Wallace, Col Bennett, John Russell, Terry Butler, Jimmy Rooney, Roy McCormack, Billy Rogers, Ken Wilson and John Doyle. Coach was Phil Bottalico. In the twenty Grand Finals between 1957 and 1976, A.P.I.A. played in nine Grand Finals winning four and losing five. Their fans will have their fingers crossed that Les De Celis can finally bring some long overdue silverware to Lambert Park.

*With many thanks to all the emails and messages we got in response to nominations for the 'Archie Markopoulos Haireut of the Year Award' the judges have been calculating the points and will be revealing all in the next few weeks. While the main contenders have included the likes of, Simon Catanzaro, Chad "Bart Simpson" Taylor, Leigh "Red is a beautiful colour" Gunn we have had a late nomination for John Kyriazopoulos for his

bleached blonde Goaty Beard thingy which the judges are now pondering.

*Former St. George defender Sebastian Sinovic has been starring in recent weeks for the Syracuse Salty Dogs playing in the US A-League. In their first two games (wins against the Charlotte Eagles and the Toronto Lynx) Sinovic has been amongst his teams best, and is clearly enjoying his new club and league. The Syracuse website www.syracuse.com has live audio broadcasts of the games (check the listings on the website) and in replay.

*On the subject of Premier League players abroad, it looks like Golden Boot winner James Monie has been successful in his trials with Malaysian club side Kedah. Monie is currently just waiting to agree terms with his new team.



SOCCER NSW



WINTER SUPER LEAGUE REVIEW

By Greg Stock

The big Sydney wet took its toll last weekend with not a ball being kicked in anger at any of the seven Super League games due for decision in the past week.

Manly's catchup game with Fraser Park, which was scheduled for last Wednesday had to be cancelled after 100mm of rain fell on the Northern beaches in the twenty four hours prior to the game. The six games for round thirteen also fell by wayside leaving a huge backlog of twelve matches to be played over the remainder of the year.

With the forecast for a week of sunshine, the two games set down for Wednesday night look to be a good chance to be played. Phil Moss' Manly-Warringah Dolphins will look to arrest a midseason slump when they host the Fraser Park Dragons at Cromer Park. Manly have lost just one of their past six starts but haven't won a game since April 13th when they beat Dulwich Hill.

Considered by many to be top three material, they'll be doing it tough without suspended midfielder Craig Sharpley, but will have captain courageous Phil Moss back in harness alongside Steve Berry who is over an injured hamstring. Fraser Park bounced back from a four-week hiatus of postponed games to defeat Macarthur 2-1 in a tough game two weeks back.

Coach Ian Gillan is confident his team can continue their winning form and move up the table from their current spot in seventh. "Our biggest problem has been the weather and the lack of games," said Gillan. "While other clubs have been out playing each week, we have had three games postponed and a bye which has left us a little short of match practice. Once we get our legs back again we'll improve and we'll be there when the whips are cracking." A tough game to find a winner,

a draw the most likely result.

The other catch-up game is on at Seymour Shaw where John Turner's Sharks will clash with this season's surprise packets Stanmore Hawks. Turner has released former Blacktown City midfielder Peter Sermann and signed Bulls skipper Jason Connolly as a free agent and Bankstown goalkeeper Zlatko Josevski to boost his sides fortunes.

Their win over Manly has taken them back into the top three setting this game up nicely as a clash between third and fourth, both equal on 19 competition points. "I always maintained that we were going to start the season off slowly and I have been happy to see us come through our first ten games with just one loss" said coach John Turner. "We are getting better with every game and I'm looking for us to lift our game in the second half of the season and really mount some pressure for the top three."

Two players to keep an eye on are Andrew Smith and Dale Robinson, who are without question, two of the very best youngsters in the league. A tough game on paper but on experience and class the Sharks juggernaut should roll on and claim another scalp.

On Saturday night, Sutherland will back up for their second home game four days when they host the Hurstville City Minotaurs. Since their glory days of the late 1990's when they won the old First Division Championship the poor old Minotaurs have fallen on some hard times, slipping into the relegation zone with five points from ten games. Coach Peter 'The General' Sankakis has signed Suns goalkeeper Peter Trajceviski on loan but he'll need a few more quality players if he is to perform a heroic act and lift his side up from bottom spot on the ladder. The tip - Sutherland two from two this week.

On Sunday, Manly will be away to Chris Cowley's Ryde City at Magdala Oval and they'll be keen to dish out another loss to the

struggling Gunners.

Despite some promising performances early on, Ryde look a little on for quality and have been unable to concentrate fully for a full ninety minutes. Six consecutive losses have left the club in all sorts of trouble and they'll need to pick their game up or face possible relegation at season's end. Manly should win comfortably.

At Ernie Smith Reserve the vastly improved MSC Liverpool will host AC United in the local derby. Coach Paul Carter has seemingly turned the corner with his team, their 1-0 victory over Ryde City last start testament to the fact they will cause a few problems in the second round.

AC United are currently running second on twenty-one points and look to be emerging

as a genuine threat for the title, with this game capable of going either way. The tip - a lively match to finish in a draw.

Sydney Uni and Hajduk looks an interesting fixture at University Oval, Rob Smithies expected to be fit and raring to go for the 'students'.

Uni coach Stewart Porter has had Eagles boss John Calleja running some sessions this week and they'll be a good chance for an upset.

Hajduk have released second choice goalkeeper Darren Cross to Second Division club Parramatta City, signing former Canterbury 'keeper Tristan Tulloch in his place. In sixth place on sixteen points, it's games like these that they'll need to win if they are to move up into the top five and become a force.

The tip - Hajduk to prevail in a close one.

League leaders Crescent Star remain undefeated heading into round two. Their opponents this week Dulwich Hill have a new coach in Jimmy Palikas and if the rumours prove correct, a number of profile recruits and should give plenty of cheek. A bumper crowd on hand should give the home side the edge and see them home, but not before a scare or two from an unlikely opponent.

In other game Stanmore Hawks and Fraser Park will square off at Arlington Oval to complete the round, with the Hawks to knock off one of the leagues leading lights, Macarthur Rams enjoying a second week off with the bye.



WINTER SUPER LEAGUE ROUND 14

● Sutherland V Hurstville City
Sat 24th May 6pm Seymour Shaw

● Sydney University SC V Hajduk Wanderers
Sat 24th May 3pm Syd Uni 1

● Stanmore Hawks V Fraser Park
Sun 25th May 3pm Arlington Oval

● MSC Liverpool V AC United
Sun 25th May 3pm Ernie Smith Res

● Ryde City V Manly Warringah
Sun 25th May 3pm Magdala Oval

● Sydney Crescent Star V Dulwich Hill
Sun 25th May 5pm Lidcombe Oval

Macarthur Rams V BYE

WINTER SUPER & STATE LEAGUE RESULTS & TABLES

WINTER SUPER LEAGUE FIRST GRADE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
Sydney CS	11	9	2	0	40	20	20	29
AC United	11	6	3	2	25	18	9	21
Sutherland Sharks	10	5	4	1	19	10	9	19
Manly Warringah	11	4	4	3	25	18	7	16
Hajduk Wanderers	10	4	4	2	11	6	5	16
Stanmore Hawks	10	5	1	4	14	18	-4	16
MSC Liverpool	11	4	3	4	17	16	1	15
Fraser Park Dragons	8	4	1	3	18	11	7	13
Macarthur Rams	11	3	3	5	11	18	-7	12
Sydney University	9	3	0	6	11	21	-10	9
Dulwich Hill	10	2	1	7	14	15	-1	7
Ryde City	10	2	0	8	14	31	-17	6
Hillville City Minotaurs	10	1	2	7	9	28	-19	5

WINTER SUPER LEAGUE GRADE 21

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
Manly Warringah	11	6	5	0	22	11	9	23
Stanmore Hawks	10	11	2	2	17	9	8	20
Fraser Park Dragons	8	6	1	1	24	8	16	19
Sutherland Sharks	10	5	3	2	21	11	10	18
AC United	11	5	3	3	22	15	7	18
Hajduk Wanderers	10	5	2	3	21	9	12	17
Sydney University	10	5	1	4	18	16	2	16
Dulwich Hill	10	5	1	4	13	11	2	16
Macarthur Rams	11	2	4	5	12	21	-9	8
MSC Liverpool	11	1	5	5	12	21	-9	8
Sydney CS	11	2	2	7	19	32	-12	8
Ryde City	10	1	1	7	8	25	-17	7
Hillville City Minotaurs	11	0	0	11	13	33	-20	6

WINTER SUPER LEAGUE GRADE 19

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
Sydney CS	11	10	1	0	35	12	17	31
AC United	11	7	1	3	28	14	14	22
Manly Warringah	11	7	1	3	23	13	12	22
Dulwich Hill	10	6	3	2	21	13	8	18
Sutherland Sharks	10	4	2	4	16	15	1	14
Stanmore Hawks	10	4	2	4	11	16	0	14
Fraser Park Dragons	8	4	0	4	12	12	0	12
Macarthur Rams	11	3	3	5	17	24	-7	12
Ryde City	10	3	2	5	12	15	3	11
Sydney University	10	3	2	5	16	20	-4	11
MSC Liverpool	11	3	1	7	14	18	-4	10
Hajduk Wanderers	10	2	2	6	10	22	-12	8
Hillville City Minotaurs	11	1	2	8	11	29	-12	5

STATE LEAGUE DIVISION ONE FIRST GRADE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
Northern Tigers	8	8	0	0	31	7	24	24
Bathurst '75	8	7	1	0	28	10	18	22
(B Jenke 65/69m A For 82)								

STATE LEAGUE DIVISION ONE GRADE 21

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
Northern Tigers	2	2	0	0	16	7	9	6
Bathurst '75	2	2	0	0	16	7	9	6

STATE LEAGUE DIVISION ONE GRADE 19

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
Northern Tigers	13	9	3	1	31	12	19	30
Mt Pritchard	12	7	4	1	14	7	7	25
Wanderers Cedars	12	7	2	3	28	17	11	23
Hurstville ZSC	11	6	4	1	18	13	5	22
Nepean Association	12	5	5	2	16	11	5	20
Hills United	12	5	3	4	15	13	2	18
Bathurst '75	13	5	3	5	11	12	1	18
Schofields Scorpions	12	3	6	3	13	12	1	15
White City	12	4	3	5	18	22	-4	15
Western Rage	12	2	5	5	20	26	-6	11
Belmore Hercules	11	3	0	8	17	25	-8	9
Mt Druitt Town	12	2	3	7	16	18	-2	8
Liverpool Bossy	12	2	2	8	12	20	-8	8
Wollongong United	12	2	1	9	15	30	-15	7

STATE LEAGUE DIVISION ONE GRADE 21

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
Northern Tigers	13	9	3	1	24	9	15	30
Nepean Association	12	8	3	1	35	12	23	27
Mt Pritchard	12	7	5	0	32	10	22	26
Hills United	12	7	3	2	43	12	31	24
Schofields Scorpions	12	7	2	3	33	11	22	23
Hurstville ZSC	11	6	2	3	22	14	8	20
Wanderers Cedars	12	6	1	5	29	16	13	19
Mt Druitt Town	12	4	3	5	16	20	-4	15
White City	12	4	1	7	24	32	-8	13
Bathurst '75	13	4	1	8	19	27	-8	13
Liverpool Bossy	12	3	3	6	20	28	-8	12
Wollongong United	12	2	1	9	15	43	-28	7
Belmore Hercules	11	2	1	8	10	41	-31	7
Western Rage	12	0	1	11	12	59	-47	1

STATE LEAGUE DIVISION ONE GRADE 19

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
Nepean Association	12	11	1	0	56	12	44	34
Northern Tigers	13	11	0	2	40	14	26	33
Hills United	12	8	2	2	33	11	22	26
White City	12	7	0	5	30	20	10	21
Mt Pritchard	12	6	2	4	26	11	15	20
Mt Druitt Town	12	5	4	3	21	16	5	19
Bathurst '75	13	5	2	6	26	23	3	17
Wanderers Cedars	12	4	3	5	31	28	3	15
Schofields Scorpions	12	3	6	3	16	14	2	15
Western Rage	12	3	3	6	22	46	-24	12
Hurstville ZSC	11	3	2	6	17	29	-12	11
Wollongong United	12	2	1	9	18	46	-28	7
Liverpool Bossy	12	2	0	10	24	59	-35	6
Belmore Hercules	11	0	2	9	4	35	-31	2

STATE LEAGUE DIVISION TWO FIRST GRADE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
Concord FC	10	7	0	3	26	10	16	21
University of NSW	10	5	4	1	28	19	9	19
Springwood	10	5	3	2	27	13	14	18
University of NSW	10	5	3	2	21	12	9	18
Western Red Devils	10	5	3	2	26	21	5	18
Camden Tigers	10	5	3	2	21	19	2	18
Greenland SC	10	5	3	2	25	24	1	18
Blacktown Assoc	10	5	1	4	21	15	6	16
Hawkesbury City SC	10	3	2	5	18	17	1	11
Hakoah	9	2	4	3	13	16	-3	10
Mingara Lakers	10	3	1	6	12	19	-7	10
Parramatta City	10	3	1	6	15	25	-10	10
Sporting SCC	9	1	1	7	6	20	-14	4
Auburn Star	10	0	1	9	10	39	-29	1

STATE LEAGUE DIVISION TWO GRADE 21

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
Hawkesbury City SC	10	8	1	1	24	8	16	25
University of NSW	10	7	2	1	36	12	24	23
Springwood	10	6	2	2	26	10	16	20
Greenland SC	10	5	2	3	25	18	7	17
Parramatta City	10	5	2	3	22	20	2	17
Greystanes	10	4	3	3	21	11	10	15
Western Red Devils	10	4	3	3	25	20	5	15
Sporting SCC	9	4	2	3	29	13	16	14
Hakoah	9	4	2	3	18	11	7	14
Camden Tigers	10	4	2	4	16	14	2	14
Concord FC	10	4	1	5	18	25	-7	13
Blacktown Assoc	10	2	0	8	17	39	-22	6
Auburn Star	10	0	1	9	7	41	-34	1
Mingara Lakers	10	0	1	9	3	45	-42	1

STATE LEAGUE DIVISION TWO GRADE 19

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
University of NSW	10	8	2	0	38	5	33	26
Greystanes	10	7	2	1	39	14	25	23
Camden Tigers	10	7	1	2	46	10	36	22
Parramatta City	10	6	1	3	29	16	13	19
Sporting SCC	9	6	1	2	25	20	5	19
Blacktown Assoc	10	5	1	4	20	17	3	16
Hakoah	9	4	2	3	20	10	10	14



SOCCER NSW



YOUTH LEAGUE REVIEW

By Barry Davis

The wet weather caused cancellations galore across the state on the week end and of course, we were affected, again! So, instead of a review of non-existent matches we are providing you with a review of the year to date, club by club and age group by age group

Premier Youth League

Blacktown City are on top of the Combined Table at this stage. Although they have not always led the way this season, they have been thereabouts at all times. They have a full set of catch-up matches (5 games) to play. Ken Schembri's 12s are the only undefeated team in PYL and they are on top of their table with the best defensive record in that league. Paul Costantini's 13s have been finding the going a bit tougher than in their Cadet League days when they were undefeated for two seasons. Their only loss for this year was in the very first round. Like the Demons' 12s, they lead the competition. George Kolmanis coaches the 14s and he must be tearing his hair out as his charges struggle to find the consistency he craves for them. They have been up and down the top half of the table like a yo-yo and they are currently sitting in fifth spot. The Demons' 15s are coached by Nick Tarquinio and they too have had their share of problems but they have been able to battle through them to well and truly earn their place in the top five. They have the tightest defence in the PYL, let alone their own age group. Although the Demons' 17s have been struggling in recent weeks coach Phil McMullen believes they will come good and claim a spot in the top five at the business end of the season.

Olympic Sharks are second on the Combined Table and like the Demons, they have a full set of five matches up their sleeves. Olympic's 12 are sitting in third place, a mere five points behind the leaders while the Michael Soames coached 13s have also claimed third spot with the meanest defence in their league and they are only two points adrift of the leaders. The Sharks' 14s are the club's only team not currently in the top five as they are in sixth spot but they have the best defensive record in that competition and they are only a win away from fourth place. In the 15s, Olympic share the lead but have to settle for second place on goal difference and the 17s are in third spot, three points behind the joint leaders and they have a better attacking record than both of them.

Parramatta Eagles' association with Manchester United has been well documented and has no doubt helped them to attract many quality players to their ranks. They are in third place overall and they have played their full quota of scheduled matches. The 12s are the club's only team to be found outside the top five. They are ninth in a highly competitive league. Their 13s are in second place, only one point behind the pace-setters, and they have lost only once so far. Parramatta's 14s have established a four point lead at the top of their competition, having taken points from eleven of their twelve matches to date. The 15s are in fifth place but only a point behind third while the 17s are fourth on goal difference and a single point behind third spot.

Northern Spirit hold down fourth spot in the Club Championship with two of their teams outside the top five and having played all their scheduled matches. Spirit's 12s are in second place with the best attacking record in that competition. While they are only a point behind, they do not have a match in hand. Remarkably, Spirit's 13s have the best attacking record in the entire PYL but they are "only" in fourth place on their table, four points from the leaders. Languishing in eighth place, Spirit's 14s will need to pull up their socks now if they are to make up the four points they are behind fifth spot. Their 15s are much better placed in third position on goal difference but four points adrift of the leaders. Dropping off the pace and finding themselves in ninth spot, Spirit's 17s may find it difficult to make up the six points they currently need to claim a place in the top five.

Wollongong Wolves round of the top five on the Combined Table and they have only one match in hand (U17s). They trail Northern Spirit by only three points and they are six points ahead of Marconi Stallions. The Wolves' 12s are fourth but they are the lowest scoring team in that top five and they are seven points off the pace. Their 13s are only two points outside "the five" in sixth spot on goal difference. Wollongong's 14s are well placed in second spot with the best scoring record in their league. However, the Wolves' 15s are not having the best of seasons, sitting eighth on the table, ten points outside the top five. Sharing the lead on points but having to settle for second on goal difference, the 17s would be very pleased with their season so far.

Marconi Stallions are sixth overall and they are within striking distance of a top five finish as they have up to six games in hand on those above them.

Their 12s are fifth on goal difference, four points behind fourth spot so they will need to keep on winning as they have three teams immediately behind them, all within a point. It is difficult to see how their ninth-placed 13s can make up the ten points they need to qualify for the finals series. However, the 14s are well placed at third, only five points behind the leaders. Faring very well indeed, the 15s lead their competition on goal difference and they are the leading scorers in that league. While the 17s are currently languishing in tenth place, they do have up to two games in hand on the top five and they are only seven points behind fourth spot.

Newcastle United have little chance of qualifying for a Combined Table top five spot but few can deny that they have performed very well since returning to the top echelon this season and further improvement is expected from the northerners. Their 12s are eleventh but may be looking for a higher place as the season progresses. They are fifth in the 13s, only six points off the pace. While they have a good defensive record, they do not score nearly as many goals as those around them on the table. The 14s are having a fairly bleak season as they linger in twelfth place. Doing a little better are the ninth-placed 15s who have only an outside chance of a top five place. The 17s are making an impact on the competition and they have been described by some good judges as being one of the best teams in the competition. Currently fifth on goal difference and only four points off the pace, they have the best defensive record in their competition.

Sydney United appear to be undergoing a revival of sorts this season. Long-time Youth League watchers will know that United once had a reputation for producing top class young players who went on to play in the National League, for the Socceroos and some who earned their living overseas. While pickings have been slim in recent years, this year's crop is showing some positive signs for the club. The 12s are eighth, only a point behind fifth but the 13s are not having a good season, placed twelfth with only one win to show for their efforts so far. Ben de Haan is a young coach with a bright future and his PYL debut season sees him helping United's 14s to fourth place, although they have been as high as second. The 15s are well off the pace in eleventh spot and the 17s, now under the control of their third coach for the season are eighth, only two points behind fourth.

Bankstown City Cubs are having a mixed bag of results in their first season at the top level. Their 12s are the only PYL team yet to record a win and they have the worst scoring record in the PYL. The 13s, like the 12s, are last on their table. Looking much better are the 14s who are threatening for a place in the top five from seventh spot. The 15s are going better still and they will be eyeing off a top five finish. Better still are the 17s who lead the way in their competition by goal difference.

A.P.I.A. Leichhardt Tigers are tenth overall but they have ten games in hand and that could make a difference to their placing. The 12s are their best performed team at sixth on goal difference. The 13s are well out of the running but the 14s have room for improvement of their table position. The 15s are a long way off the pace and so are the 17s who are currently eleventh.

Central Coast Coasties will be disappointed with their season so far, especially considering the depth of playing talent in their soccer-rich area. The 12s are tenth and the 13s are eighth and both can substantially improve their positions. Their 14s, 15s and 17s are all well off the pace and have little prospect of playing beyond round twenty-six.

Sutherland Shire Sharks seem to be losing the race for local talent to neighbouring Olympic Sharks but it is surprising the Sydney's biggest Association cannot support two highly competitive clubs. The 12, 14s and 17s are all definitely out of contention for top five places as all are in thirteenth place in their respective competitions. The 13s are seventh, only two points outside the five, while the 15s are also seventh, five points behind fifth.

Penrith Panthers will be looking for ways to improve their lot. Their 12s are seventh and only a point from fifth. Both the 13s and 14s are tenth with little realistic chance while both the 15s and 17s are to be found at the foot of their respective tables.

Southern Branch struggled last season and that trend has continued this year. The 12s are having a hard time of it at twelfth place but they still have an outside chance. The 13s, 14s and 15s are all well out of the running but the 17s are very competitive, holding down seventh spot, only a point from fourth.

Super Youth League

Macarthur Rams lead the way on the Combined Table and they have every team in the top five of their respective competitions. They are eight points in front but they have played the full schedule of matches, whereas

their rivals all have games in hand. Their 12s are fourth and look like staying in the top five. The 13s are undefeated, they are the leading scorers in the SYL and they have the tightest defence in their league. The 14s are fourth on goal difference and the 15s are leading their competition. The 17s suffered a shock in their last game and have slipped back to third.

AC United also have every one of their teams in the top five and they are poised to strike as they have six games in hand on the overall leaders. Their 12s and 13s are both in third place while the 14s are fourth in a tight competition. Speaking of tight, the 15s are third in the tightest of all competitions and the 17s are sitting in fifth spot.

Nepean Association are third overall despite having three teams outside to top five. The 12s are eighth but the 13s are doing very well at second place. The 14s are undefeated on top of the table while the 15s are eighth but only three points from fifth. The John Kommanis coached 17s are eleventh but they have overcome recent difficulties and are headed up the ladder.

Manly Warringah Dolphins dropped back from PYL for this season and they are keen to return to that lofty level shortly. They are fourth overall and they have five games in hand. The 12s are undefeated in second place and they have the stingiest defence in the SYL. The 13s are fifth and the 14s are sixth with a good chance of reaching the five. The 15s are sixth in a tight competition but the 17s may be out of it from tenth spot.

Northern Tigers are fifth and that may surprise many as teams from the Ku-Ring-Gai district rarely do well. Their 12s are unbeaten, five points clear at the top of the table but the 13s are struggling at tenth place. The 14s are fourth but the 15s are second-from-bottom while the 17s are a dark horse, sitting eighth and only five points from fourth.

Hills United are sixth overall and they have no matches in hand. The 12s are tenth and they have some hope of a top five berth but the 13s are much better placed for that at sixth spot. Sadly, the 14s have yet to earn a point for their efforts. However, the 15s are fourth and the 17s have streaked away to five points in front of their rivals.

St George also took the drop from PYL last season and they would have been expecting to bounce straight back. That does not appear to be happening as they are currently seventh and a long way off the pace. Their 12s are ninth and their 13s are sailing along nicely in fourth spot. The 14s are ninth but the 15s are fifth in that log jam top half of their league. The 17s are ninth and they have a half-chance of claiming a top five spot.

Hajduk Wanderers are eighth overall. The 12s are well off the pace in eleventh spot and so are the 13s who are thirteenth. Their 14s are second and only a point behind the leaders while the 15s may still be in contention from seventh place. The 17s are holding down fourth position.

Blacktown Association are ninth overall and may be on the improve. Their 12s are sixth and the 13s are seventh with both having chances to grab top five spots. The 14s are out of the running and so are the 15s but the 17s could reach loftier heights than their current sixth.

Eastern Suburbs are Sydney's smallest Association and therefore have a limited talent pool but they are doing reasonably well under the circumstances. Their 12s are fifth and their 13s are ninth and still in contention. The 14s are seventh and a chance while the 15s are second in that tight competition. Sadly, the 17s are battling to avoid the wooden spoon.

Fairfield Bulls appear to be stuck with eleventh spot overall. Their 12s are at the bottom of the table but the 13s have an outside chance from eighth. The 14s and 15s will both finish in the bottom half of the table. However, the 17s are second on their table and are doing very well indeed.

Camden Tigers were promoted to SYL for this season and they have had difficulty in adjusting to the increased demands but there is light at the end of the tunnel for them. The 12s are seventh with a good chance of a top five spot but the 13s are at the bottom end. The 14s are eighth and they can make it and while the 15s are inching up the table, the task may be too difficult for them. The 17s have slipped back a bit to seventh but they are capable of reversing that trend.

Mingara Lakers are having a tough time and they are thirteenth overall. Their 12s, 13s, 14s and 17s are all well off the pace and have no chance of playing in the finals series. They same could be said for the 15s but anything could happen in that competition.

Bonnyrigg White Eagles are anchored to the bottom of the Combined Table. While they have been working hard at reducing the size of their losses, the fact is that they are still losing and that must be addressed urgently if they are to avoid the wooden spoon. Their 12s are in twelfth spot and the 13s have yet to win a game. The Ian Lloyd coached 14s have clawed their way up to eleventh but the 15s are still in last position. The 17s have shown some glimpses of promise but they are still twelfth.



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SOCCER NSW

Division One Youth League

Ryde City are the current leaders of this division and they have a seven point break but they have played the full schedule of games. They have their 12s and 13s in fourth place, their 14s at second, their 15s in the lead and the 17s at eighth.

Schofields Scorpions are desperate to win promotion and they are second with five games in hand. Their 12s are second, the 13s are undefeated in third place, the 14s are on top, the 15s are fourth and the Brian "Geezer" Summers coached 17s are now six points outside the five at tenth position.

Mt Pritchard are a surprise packet at third spot so far and they could yet do better. They have their 12s in eighth place with the 13s at second. The 14s are fifth and the 15s are second while the 17s are in a competitive sixth spot.

Wollongong United are having a very good season so far. Their 12s have nabbed the top spot but the 13s are a way behind in eighth place. The 14s are fourth while the 15s and 17s are both fifth in their competitions.

Dulwich Hill have climbed the ladder quickly with a mixture of results. The 12s are eleventh but the 13s and 14s are rather more competitive at

seventh spot. The 15s and 17s are both in third spots in their leagues.

MSC Liverpool are still fairly strong at sixth place overall. Their 12s are seventh, the 13s are fifth, the 14s are sixth and the 15s are seventh. All have chances to grab top five spots. The 17s are lingering at the bottom of the table.

Canterbury Bankstown have had a mixed bag of results so far. While their 12s are tenth and well out of it, the 13s are on top. Their 14s are third but the 15s have yet to post a win and the 17s have also found spot in the lower half of their table.

Parramatta City would have expected to do better than a mid-table eighth at this stage. Their 12s are third but the rest of the news is not so good. The 13s are last, the 14s are eleventh and the 15s are ninth. There is better news in the 17s who are now fourth.

Stammore Hawks are well out of the running for overall honours. Their 12s are fifth but the 13s are loitering at thirteenth and the 14s are last. The 15s are placed eleventh but the 17s are doing really well as they are leading their competition at the moment.

Granville Association have their 12s and 13s on the verge of cracking

it for a top five berth as both are very close indeed. Their 14s, 15s and 17s are all well out of the running for any honours this season.

Mt Pritchard are also struggling this year. So far, their 12s are well off the pace but the 13s have an outside chance of a spot in the five and so do the 14s. The 15s appear to be out of it but the 17s are very close and could yet do the job.

Rockdale City Suns have had better seasons. At this stage, their 12s and 14s are well outside consideration but the 13s could make it if they have a strong second half to the season. The 15s could be there but the task looks to be beyond the 17s.

Hawkesbury City have struggled for years and they continue to do so. Reasonably well performed, their 12s are ninth but the 13s are in twelfth place and the 14s and 15s are both thirteenth. They 17s are very well credentialed at second place in their league and only a point behind the leaders.

Hurstville City Minotaur are in last place overall and they will probably remain there. Their teams are all well off the pace in their respective competitions with only the 15s having a remote chance of qualifying for the top five.

PREMIER YOUTH LEAGUE GRADE 12

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Blacktown City	11	9	2	0	28	8	29
Northern Spirit	12	8	1	2	37	14	28
Olympic Sharks	11	8	0	3	26	12	24
Wollongong Wolves	12	6	4	2	15	9	22
Marconi	11	5	3	3	21	15	18
A.P.I.A. Leichhardt	10	6	0	4	15	14	18
Penrith	12	5	2	5	16	15	17
Sydney United	12	5	2	5	19	19	17
Parramatta Eagles	12	4	2	6	15	17	14
Central Coast	11	3	3	5	14	16	12
Newcastle United	11	3	3	5	17	20	12
Sutherland	12	3	2	7	9	27	11
Sutherland	11	1	1	9	11	32	4
Bankstown City	12	0	1	11	3	28	1

PREMIER YOUTH LEAGUE COMBINED

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
Blacktown City	55	36	9	10	109	47	62	117
Olympic Sharks	55	36	7	12	129	53	76	115
Parramatta Eagles	60	32	13	15	108	63	45	109
Northern Spirit	60	32	7	21	143	89	54	103
Wollongong Wolves	59	30	10	19	114	79	35	100
Marconi Stallions	54	27	10	17	107	77	30	91
Newcastle United	55	19	17	19	78	80	2	74
Sydney United	60	19	14	27	84	97	13	71
Bankstown City	60	15	15	29	64	107	43	63
A.P.I.A. Leichhardt	50	17	8	25	54	96	42	59
Central Coast	55	13	17	25	61	93	-32	56
Sutherland Shire	55	14	13	28	62	94	-32	55
Penrith Panthers	60	15	9	36	69	115	-46	54
Southern Branch YL	60	13	11	36	67	159	92	52

SUPER YOUTH LEAGUE GRADE 17

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
Hills United	12	9	2	1	24	10	14	29
Fairfield Bulls	11	7	3	1	29	16	13	24
Macarthur Rams	12	7	2	3	28	17	11	23
Hajduk Wanderers	12	6	2	4	26	17	9	20
AC United	10	6	2	2	18	10	8	20
Blacktown Assoc	12	6	2	4	21	14	7	20
Camden Tigers	12	5	1	6	20	15	5	16
Northern Tigers	11	4	3	4	14	17	1	15
St George	11	4	2	5	15	14	1	14
Manly Warringah	11	3	3	5	15	16	1	12
Nepean Association	11	4	0	7	17	24	7	12
Bonnyrigg WE	12	3	0	9	12	33	21	9
Mingara Lakers	11	1	2	8	12	22	10	5
Eastern Suburbs	10	1	2	7	12	28	26	5

DIVISION ONE YOUTH LEAGUE GRADE 15

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
Ryde City	12	10	1	1	29	12	17	31
Mt Pritchard	11	10	0	1	39	5	34	30
Dulwich Hill	11	9	2	0	40	5	35	29
Schofields Scorpions	11	8	3	2	22	7	15	21
Wollongong United	12	6	1	5	15	17	-2	19
Rockdale City Suns	11	4	3	4	18	24	-6	15
MSC Liverpool	12	3	5	4	22	21	1	14
Hurstville City	11	3	3	12	10	2	12	12
Parramatta City	11	4	0	7	10	25	-15	12
Mt Pritchard	12	3	2	7	18	26	-8	11
Stammore Hawks	11	3	2	6	10	20	-10	11
Granville Assoc	11	2	0	9	5	27	-22	8
Hawkesbury City	11	1	2	8	5	36	-30	5
Cbury Bankstown	11	0	4	7	5	16	-11	4

B.B. YOUTH LEAGUE GRADE 14

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
Southern Branch	8	8	0	0	35	5	30	24
Blackdown Assoc	8	6	1	1	38	10	28	19
Marconi	7	6	0	1	31	8	23	18
Nepean Association	9	5	1	3	26	12	14	16
Olympic Sharks	8	5	0	3	24	9	15	15
Macarthur Rams	8	3	2	3	19	8	11	11
Wollongong Wolves	7	3	2	2	15	6	9	11
NW Sydney Koalas	7	3	2	2	14	8	6	11
Manly Warringah	8	3	1	4	19	10	9	10
Granville Magpies	8	3	0	5	11	31	-20	9
St George Assoc	8	1	1	6	6	43	-37	4
Northern Tigers	8	0	0	8	2	38	-36	0
Central Coast	8	0	0	8	2	54	-52	0

PREMIER YOUTH LEAGUE GRADE 13

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Blacktown City	11	9	1	1	28	8	28
Parramatta Eagles	12	8	3	1	26	11	27
Olympic Sharks	11	8	2	1	39	7	26
Northern Spirit	12	8	0	2	42	18	24
Newcastle United	11	7	1	3	16	9	22
Wollongong Wolves	12	6	2	4	34	17	20
Sutherland	11	5	1	5	20	12	16
Central Coast	11	5	1	5	13	20	16
Marconi	11	3	3	5	23	25	12
Penrith	12	3	2	7	17	20	11
Southern Branch	12	2	1	9	10	42	7
Sydney United	12	1	3	8	11	32	6
A.P.I.A. Leichhardt	10	2	0	8	8	30	6
Bankstown City	12	1	0	11	8	42	3

SUPER YOUTH LEAGUE GRADE 12

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
Northern Tigers	12	10	2	0	36	7	29	32
Manly Warringah	11	8	3	0	24	2	22	27
AC United	11	7	3	1	33	15	18	24
Macarthur Rams	12	6	2	4	20	17	3	20
Eastern Suburbs	10	5	3	2	24	10	14	18
Blacktown Assoc	12	4	5	3	12	8	4	17
Camden Tigers	12	4	5	3	10	16	-6	17
Nepean Association	11	4	2	5	13	12	1	14
St George	11	3	4	4	11	14	-3	13
Hills United	12	4	1	7	12	19	7	13
Hajduk Wanderers	12	2	2	8	12	34	-22	8
Bonnyrigg WE	12	1	4	7	7	18	-9	7
Mingara Lakers	11	1	2	8	7	25	-18	5
Fairfield Bulls	11	1	2	8	9	35	-26	5

SUPER YOUTH LEAGUE COMBINED

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
Macarthur Rams	60	36	9	15	129	64	65	117
AC United	54	32	13	9	114	61	53	109
Nepean Association	55	30	9	16	99	59	40	99
Manly Warringah	55	29	11	15	98	56	42	98
Northern Tigers	59	26	14	19	95	74	21	92
Hills United	60	25	8	27	73	94	-21	83
St George	55	22	18	17	76	68	8	82
Hajduk Wanderers	60	25	6	29	92	96	-4	81
Blacktown Assoc	60	22	13	25	88	91	-3	79
Eastern Suburbs	50	22	9	19	95	95	0	75
Fairfield Bulls	55	19	10	26	76	102	-26	67
Camden Tigers	60	16	12	30	74	101	-27	65
Mingara Lakers	55	10	12	33	54	104	-50	42
Bonnyrigg WE	60	8	8	44	38	138	-100	32

DIVISION ONE YOUTH LEAGUE GRADE 17

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
Stammore Hawks	11	8	2	1	22	8	14	26
Hawkesbury City	11	8	1	2	23	9	14	25
Dulwich Hill	11	7	1	3	34	19	15	22
Parramatta City	11	7	1	3	26	13	13	22
Wollongong United	12	6	4	2	28	22	6	22
Mt Pritchard	11	6	0	5	23	18	5	18
Mt Pritchard	12	5	2	5	17	19	-2	17
Ryde City	12	4	4	4	17	15	2	16
Rockdale City Suns	11	4	1	6	18	27	-9	13
Schofields Scorpions	11	3	1	7	17	23	-6	10
Cbury Bankstown	11	2	3	6	11	17	-6	9
Mt Pritchard	11	2	5	12	19	7	8	8
MSC Liverpool	11	2	2	8	11	30	-19	8
Granville Assoc	11	1	2	8	10	30	-20	5

attack UNDER 11 METROPOLITAN LEAGUE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
Granville Association	9	9	0	0	37	4	33	27
Gadswill Hornsby	9	9	0	0	33	2	31	27
Bankstown	8	6	0	2	33	5	28	18
Eastern Suburbs	9	5	2	2	19	9	10	17
Macarthur Rams	9	5	1	3	15	9	6	16
Sutherland	9	3	5	1	11	7	4	14
Southern Branch	9	4	1	4	13	16	-3	13
Nepean Association	9	4	1	4	11	16	-5	13
Kur-ring-gai	9	3	3	3	5	-13	-8	12
Manly Warringah	9	2	3	4	9	11	-2	9
Southern Districts	8	2	0	6	10	21	-11	6
Canterbury	9	1	3	5	9	21	-12	8
St George Assoc	8	2	0	6	9	23	-14	6
Blacktown Assoc	8	1	3	4	6	20	-14	6
Central Coast	8	1	1	6	6	29	-23	4
Newara Association	8	0	1	7	3	23	-20	1

PREMIER YOUTH



SOCCER NSW



STATE SOCCER GALA DAYS



The competition has been extended this year - inviting not only Sydney and Central Coast schools but also Country NSW schools.

To promote a participation rather than competitive feel to the event, teams will be divided into three categories: Novice, Semi-experienced and Experienced. Each team will get to play at least 3 games of 20 minutes a half, on a field half the normal dimensions for primary schools and full field for high schools.

The team at the top of each pool will receive a medallion and all players will receive a certificate of participation. Teams will also have the chance to win a prize pack for their school, containing soccer balls, training bibs and field markers, in a special shooting competition. All players during the event will also be in the draw for soccer balls, drink bottles and sports bags.

The Girls State Soccer Gala days are an important part of our Girl's Soccer Program, "Why Should the Boys Have All the Fun?" This event aims to expose school girls to soccer in a fun way. With the success of the 2002 Youth World Cup, the Australian Matildas successful campaign to qualify for the Womens World Cup in September of this year and

the release of the movie, 'Bend It Like Beckham', more girls are interested in getting involved with "The World Game".

We will have special guest appearances by current Australian Matildas midfielder, Taryn Rockall and goalkeeper, Cassandra Kell.

Instant Photos Australia will be on site taking action photos during the event for purchase on the day. Canteen and player facilities are also available.

Accommodation is also available at Valentine Park for Country teams who may wish to come to Sydney for a few days. Why not enter both days of the competitions and then spend time sight-seeing in Sydney.

For a Nomination form, please check the Soccer NSW website www.soccernsw.com.au or the Event and Program Coordinators - Sharon Dewar & Taryn Rockall

Phone: 9629 1800 - Head Office
Mobile: 041 4242 951
Email: womens@soccernsw.com.au

For Primary & High School Girls
Soccer NSW is pleased to announce its Second Annual GIRLS STATE 7-A-SIDE PRIMARY SOCCER GALA DAYS

and its Inaugural

GIRLS STATE HIGH SCHOOLS SOCCER GALA DAYS
To be held at Valentine Sports Park, Glenwood.
Primary Schools - Wednesday 13th & 14th August, 2003
High Schools - Wednesday 27th & 28th August, 2003

J-P RESIGNS STATE'S TOP COACHING JOB

Soccer NSW has recently accepted the resignation of state coaching and development manager Jean-Paul de Mangny.

Soccer NSW is now seeking applicants for this position.

For more information, see the advertisement below.



MANAGER COACHING AND DEVELOPMENT

Soccer NSW Ltd requires the services of a highly motivated and dedicated professional to manage all Coaching and Development programs within the State. The successful applicant will be responsible for the preparation, implementation and management of State policies and programs for the development of coaches and players at all levels of ability. Experience in the following areas is essential -

- Organisation and management of internal and external coaching and development programs
- Preparation and administration of approved budgets to include talented athlete programs.
- Supervision of both coaching and non-coaching staff as well as contractors providing soccer specific services.
- Co-ordination of submissions and reports, and effective liaison with the NSW Department of Sport and Recreation, NSW Institute of Sport, Soccer Australia and other State/Territory Federations.
- The implementation of programs within the State that promote and develop school soccer.
- Extensive knowledge of current trends in technical development and related sports training methods.
- Presentation and assessment of Coaching Educational Programs in conjunction with the National Coaching Scheme.
- Strong business administration skills and computer literacy (MS Office package).
- A minimum Senior Coaching Licence accreditation.

Desirable -

- Additional experience with elite player development for both males and females to include Representative Teams selection and management
- A comprehensive and practical understanding of specialist coaching resources and literature.
- Supplementary qualifications in Sport or Education.

The position is offered by way of a two (2) year contract. Remuneration will be commensurate with qualifications and experience. For further information contact Linda Christie - Human Resources, Soccer NSW Ltd on (02) 9629 1800 or email linda@soccernsw.com.au

This position is a Child Related Position and will be subject to a Working With Children Check. Prohibited Persons need not apply.

Applications close on Friday 30 May 2003. Applications should be clearly marked 'CONFIDENTIAL' and forwarded to Linda Christie, Human Resources, PO Box 6146, Baulkham Hills Business Centre NSW 2153.

COERVER® COACHING

"World's No.1 Soccer Program"



Fully endorsed

F.I.F.A. SOCCER AUSTRALIA, UEFA, FRENCH FOOTBALL ASSOC. ITALIAN FOOTBALL FEDERATION, MANCHESTER UNITED, AJAX, Franz Beckenbauer, Sir Stanley Matthews And Roberto Rivellino.

"Learn the moves used by the world's greatest players. Our qualified and experienced staff will demonstrate step by step how it's all done."

Coerver Coaching July School Holiday Camps

Boys and Girls aged 5-14 years

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Players Receive:

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- T-Shirt, Adidas Ball and Coerver Certificate
- Drinks provided throughout the camp
- Chance to be identified for COERVER Elite squad trials in September 2003

LIMITED PLACES AVAILABLE



Cost \$130 (inc GST)



For all your coaching needs from Bibs and Markers to Hurdles and Fast Feet Ladders, phone Bill, Roy or Norm on (02) 9629 2027 to place your order now. www.soccerwearhouse.com.au

Barry Ferguson -

Best In Scotland



Rangers skipper Barry Ferguson was named Scotland's Player of the Year.

Rangers skipper Barry Ferguson has been named Scotland's Player of the Year, but he has admitted that he needs drastic medical action to get back to full fitness.

The midfielder was selected by the Scottish Football Writers' Association to become only the fifth player to win the award twice. He has now picked up both the players' and writers' awards for this season after

leading the 'Gers to the brink of a domestic treble.

The 25-year-old has also picked up the Rangers Player of the Year gong from the club's supporters and his team-mates.

Ferguson now joins John Greig, Sandy Jardine, Brian Laudrup and Henrik Larsson as one of five players to clinch the SFWA award twice.

Celtic striker Larsson finished second behind Ferguson in the writers' poll while Stefan Klos, Ronald de Boer and Bobo Balde also scored a percentage of the votes.

But Ferguson admitted that all was not sweetness and light as he struggled with his own fitness.

He warned that he won't spend another season popping pills to play through the pain barrier for the Ibrox side. Ferguson has been plagued by a pelvic injury throughout the season.

He is set to go under the knife in the summer in a bid to cure the problem but admits he is, quite literally, sick of taking painkillers and painkilling injections.

English Premier League Final Stats

Top Scorers

- 25 Ruud van Nistelrooy (Man Utd)
- 24 Thierry Henry (Arsenal)
- 23 James Beattie (Southampton)
- 20 Mark Viduka (Leeds)
- 19 Michael Owen (Liverpool)
- 17 Alan Shearer (Newcastle)
- 14 Harry Kewell (Leeds)
- Robbie Keane (Tottenham)
- Robert Pires (Arsenal)
- Paul Scholes (Man Utd)
- Gianfranco Zola (Chelsea)
- Nicolas Anelka (Man City)



Ruud van Nistelrooy finished this year's top Premier League scorer.

Player Discipline: Premiership 2002/2003

Rank	Player	Yellow	Red	Pts
1	Alan Smith	11	2	15
2	Franck Queudrue	7	3	13
	Tomas Repka	11	1	13
	Ivan Campo	13	0	13
5	Lee Bowyer	12	0	12
6	Lucas Neill	9	1	11
	Thomas Gravesen	11	0	11
	Gareth Barry	11	0	11
	Aliou Cisse	11	0	11

Fair Play: Premiership 2002/2003

Rank	Team	Yellow	Red	Pts
1	Man Utd	46	1	48
2	Liverpool	47	3	53
	Southampton	47	3	53
4	Newcastle	48	3	54
5	Charlton	56	2	60
	Middlesbrough	50	5	60
7	Arsenal	55	3	61
	West Brom	53	4	61
9	Sunderland	60	1	62
10	Man City	54	5	64
11	Chelsea	64	1	66
12	Everton	53	7	67
13	Fulham	57	6	69
14	Tottenham	60	5	70
15	Blackburn	63	4	71
16	Aston Villa	64	4	72
17	Bolton	69	3	75
18	Leeds	71	2	75
19	West Ham	66	5	76
20	Birmingham	72	4	80

Attendance: Premiership 2002/2003

Rank	Team	Avg.
1	Man Utd	67,601
2	Newcastle	51,923
3	Liverpool	43,242
4	Chelsea	39,784
5	Sunderland	39,698
6	Leeds	39,121
7	Everton	38,480
8	Arsenal	38,041
9	Tottenham	35,897
10	Aston Villa	34,975
11	Man City	34,564
12	West Ham	34,432
13	Middlesbrough	31,025
14	Southampton	30,680
15	Birmingham	28,883
16	West Brom	26,730
17	Charlton	26,255
18	Blackburn	26,225
19	Bolton	25,016
20	Fulham	16,707



Alan Smith received England's Bad Boy of the year.

GET ZOLA, SAYS RANIERI

Chelsea manager Claudio Ranieri is adamant that the London side must retain inspirational Italian forward Gianfranco Zola for their European Champions League campaign next season.

The 37-year-old Zola has yet to commit himself to Stamford Bridge and Ranieri says it is time for club chairman Ken Bates to make his move.

Seven years in England have made Zola the Premiership's favourite for-

eign import but he is still to decide his future, and fellow Italian Ranieri said: "I very much hope he will stay."

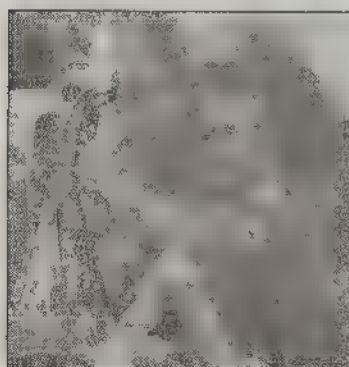
"He is a master footballer. But I am not in charge of the financial dealings at Chelsea."

Zola, however, insisted: "I would play for this club even in the First Division. It is wonderful that we are back in the Champions League because, although I've played in that competition before, it has always been a big ambition to do it again."

"But I don't want to think about a new contract yet. For now I just want to enjoy a great victory over Liverpool, this result was never going to decide whether I stayed here or not."

Provided they win a two-legged qualifier, early next season, to join the main first round groups, Chelsea - who reportedly have liabilities of 80 million pounds (120 million dollars) - stand to collect around 15 million pounds (22.5 million dollars) from Champions League involvement.

Blanc's career comes to an end



Laurent Blanc: Has said 'good bye' to his footballing career after winning the title with Manchester Utd.

The glittering career of Laurent Blanc came to an end on Sunday as the former France international defender played his last game for Manchester United.

The 37-year-old played the second half of their 2-1 victory over Everton at Goodison Park as the already-crowned Premiership champions finished their league season with a flourish.

Blanc has won the World Cup, the European championships, a French league title, has played for nine clubs and finally ended his footballing days with a Premiership title.

Blanc told the *Sunday Times*: "Criticism from the press has been part

of the job. When a club like Manchester United signs a 35-year-old player, you could ask yourself where's the sense in that."

"That's why I will be forever grateful to Alex Ferguson for having brought me here. Because to play for Manchester United is a unique experience."

Blanc confirmed: "Yes, I should have come to the club before."

In 1996, when France reached the European championship semi-finals, he used to visit Old Trafford to see his friend Eric Cantona. "One day Eric rang me and passed the phone to Ferguson but it was too late. I had signed for Barcelona the day before," Blanc added.



David Beckham was this year's top money earner in football.

Top 20 Wages 2003

Below is a detailed list of the top money earners in football today.

No.	Player's Name	Pos.	Club	Wage
1	David Beckham (Eng)	RM	Manchester United (Eng)	£202,500
2	Zinedine Zidane (Fra)	AM	Real Madrid (Spa)	£189,000
3	Ronaldo (Bra)	ST	Real Madrid (Spa)	£157,950
4	Rio Ferdinand (Eng)	CD	Manchester United (Eng)	£129,600
5	Alessandro Del Piero (Ita)	FW	Juventus (Ita)	£128,250
6	Hidetoshi Nakata (Jap)	CM	Parma (Ita)	£125,550
7	Raul (Spa)	ST	Real Madrid (Spa)	£125,550
8	Christian Vieri (Ita)	ST	Inter Milan (Ita)	£124,000
9	Michael Owen (Eng)	ST	Liverpool (Eng)	£120,150
10	Roy Keane (Ire)	DM	Manchester United (Eng)	£116,775
11	Luis Figo (Por)	RW	Real Madrid (Spa)	£116,100
12	Gabriel Batistuta (Arg)	ST	Inter Milan (Ita)	£116,100
13	Sol Campbell (Eng)	CD	Arsenal (Eng)	£109,350
14	Oliver Kahn (Ger)	GK	Bayern Munchen (Ger)	£103,275
15	Alvaro Recoba (Uru)	FW	Inter Milan (Ita)	£102,600
16	Francesco Totti (Ita)	FW	AS Roma (Ita)	£98,550
17	Rivaldo (Bra)	FW	AC Milan (Ita)	£97,200
18	Thierry Henry (Fra)	ST	Arsenal (Eng)	£83,700
19	Fabio Cannavaro (Ita)	CD	Inter Milan (Ita)	£82,080
20	Paolo Maldini (Ita)	DF	AC Milan (Ita)	£81,000

Quotes Of The Year

ABS managed to tag down a number of rather hilarious quotes made by football stars from across the globe this year – even some Australian's make the grade.

Take the time out to reflect on the funny, serious and darn right stupid comments made by lovers of the world game.

ROY KEANE

The Manchester United captain illustrates why he is such a winner. "This title isn't the sweetest – the next one always is."

MATTHEW JONES

Your heart bleeds for the Leicester City midfielder. "I didn't ask to be put on such ridiculously big wages!"

BILL FOTHERBY

The former Leeds United chairman remembers Gordon Strachan's diet at Elland Road. "Gordon was like a monkey. He ate bananas all the time."

PETER REID

The Leeds boss hands title to Manchester United with a 3-2 win against Arsenal. "Fergie should send me a decent bottle of red. I'm hoping for a crate but, knowing Fergie as I do, it will probably be a bottle!"

LAURENT BLANC

The Frenchman was jokingly labelled old by Ronaldo, but responded with a jibe of his own: "I told him he had put on weight and that he should avoid all that pael-la in Madrid!"

RONALDO

Responds in the best way. "If I weighed five kilos less I would have scored four!"

DANNY INVINCIBLE

Geography classes were limited for the Australian. "Being linked with Aberdeen is news to me. I don't know where it is, to be honest."

RON ATKINSON

The former Manchester United manager, summarising for British television on a game involving Germany does not feel midfield terrier Jens Jeremies will win any beauty contests. He said: "Good player, unfortunate face."

RAYMOND DOMENECH

The French Under-21 coach admits Bolton's Bernard Mendy still needs to work on his game. "Bernard he is a Ferrari...although, with this Ferrari, we are missing a driver."

STAN TERNENT

Burnley boss and quote of the week stalwart muses about a 7-4 defeat to Watford at Turf Moor. "They reckon Bin Laden and Saddam Hussein were having a chat and they both said they wouldn't fancy Stan Ternent's job."

PETER OSGOOD

Some controversial choice words from the former Chelsea star regarding Arsenal's Francis Jeffers. "I tell you what, if I was still a player, I'd love to take him out. I would love to see him get really hurt because he dives so much."

GRAEME SOUNESS

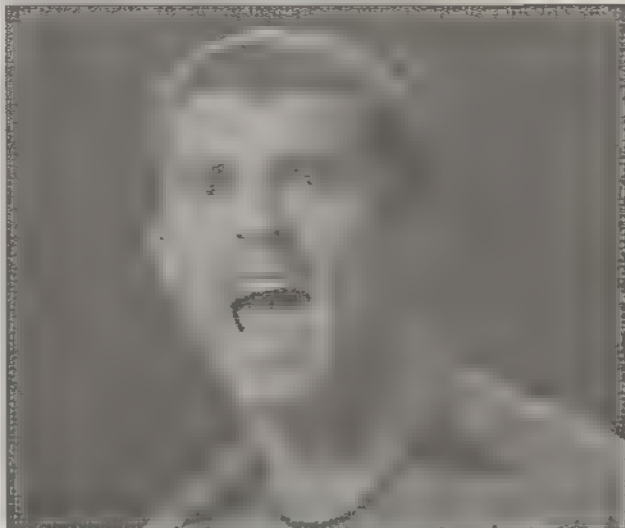
The Blackburn manager rates the Bundesliga. "Stuttgart are a good team that do well in German League. No German team is a puppet team so we will see what happens."

PETER RIDSDALE

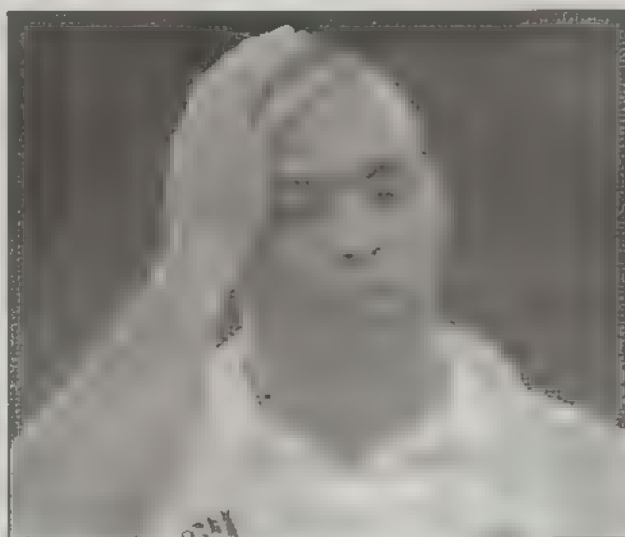
The Leeds chairman probably now regrets his comments regarding Jonathan Woodgate when selling Rio Ferdinand to Manchester United. "We only actually bought Rio in the first place because Woodgate's position was uncertain due to his involvement in what turned out to be two trials. People say we have sold our best player but you have to take a view on whether that is actually the case or not. You could argue what we have done is cover for Woodgate for 18 months in case he was not around. Now we have got him back and we have made a healthy profit on a player we only bought as cover in the first place."

MARK SCHWARZER

A rather unfortunate turn of phrase from the Middlesbrough man on fellow Australian keeper Mark Bosnich's alleged testing positive for cocaine.



Roy Keane: Manchester United star known for his up front comments on football.



Ronaldo: Brazilian star had a weight problem during this season – Paella anyone?



Paolo Di Canio: The fiery Italian is known for his true comments on referees.



Jose Chilavert: Need I say more?

"I don't want to stick my nose into his business"

HERNAN CRESPO

The Inter striker pays tribute to English clubs in his own way. "Playing against English clubs is like when your mother forced you to eat vegetables when you didn't like it. "You have to suffer a bit and eat it if you want to be strong."

BERND STANGE

The former East German coach is not concerned about taking over as manager of Iraq. "There are risks in every job, Winfried Schafer [Cameroon's German coach] could be attacked by a lion in Cameroon at any time."

GILBERTO SILVA

Arsenal's Brazilian star has strong opinions on British food! "Baked beans! I have never tasted anything like them before. They are just so... sweet. "In Brazil we eat beans all the time. But nothing like this. And your meat, it tastes as though it has been frozen for months. Why do you not eat fresh meat?"

MASSIMO MACCARONE

Middlesbrough's new superstar does not agree with the rumours about Teesside being an industrial heartland. "They said that it was an industrial city, but the industries are in the industrial zone which are not in the centre and there is no shadow of smog."

BRYAN ROBSON

The Manchester United legend misses the point a little about Roy Keane's elbow on Jason McAteer. "Jason wouldn't have much of a career as a boxer, going down from a blow like that."

GRAHAM TAYLOR

The former England coach and now Aston Villa boss, summarising for British television on the very disappointing South Africa-Slovenia game, said: "I think the full-time whistle will wake the crowd up."

DAVID BECKHAM

The England captain was somewhat understated after scoring the goal that beat Argentina. When asked how he was feeling, Becks said: "It feels better than it did four years ago." Beckham was sent off in Saint Etienne as Argentina beat England on penalties.

TONY VIDMAR

The Rangers man is forthright in his response to what the Australian players will think of the federation's bid to get the internationals to play for nothing in the Oceania Nations Cup: "They'll tell them to stick it up their a**e!"

PATRICK MBOMA

Sunderland's keen star has no intention of asking Black Cats boss Peter Reid to mimic the Cameroon sleeveless look... "At Sunderland I'm more in need of a jumper, from the weather I've experienced so far."

JOSE LUIS CHILAVERT

Responds to criticisms from Maradona – the world's greatest ever player (arguably) – with typical modesty. "Even the number one drug addict of Argentina talks about me from Cuba, that means I am a very important person."

PAOLO DI CANIO

The West Ham idol admits the real reason he stayed with The Irons... "The man who looked after my piranhas told me 'if you leave West Ham I will kill your fish.' "I have a few piranha fish but only one of them has a name – the big fat one who my nine-year-old daughter called Paolo Di Canio."

MICHAEL OWEN

Owen tells us why you wouldn't catch him in a Calvin Klein ad – although it does beg the question of why anyone would want to. "I don't want to be modelling G-strings – it's not that good for my image. I'm a footballer not a tart."

GIACLUCA VIALLI

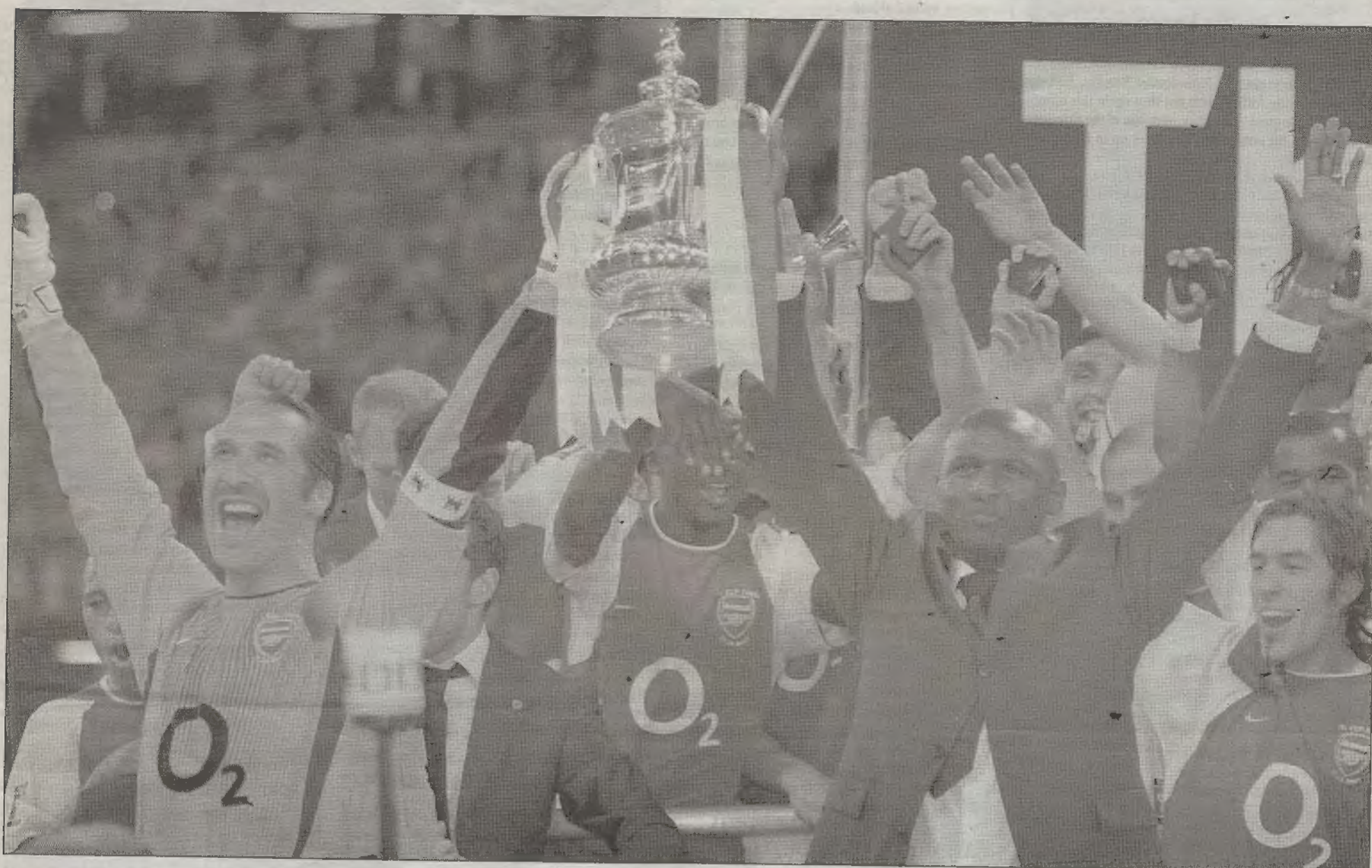
The Watford boss was asked before his side faced Arsenal, how he will try and stop Thierry Henry. "The only way to stop him is with a gun!"



ENGLISH



GUNNERS CLAIM FA CUP



Arsenal's David Seaman and Patrick Vieira hold aloft the FA Cup.

There may have been a distinct lack of romance in the air beneath the closed roof, but Robert Pires kept Arsenal's love affair with the FA Cup very much alive inside Cardiff's Millennium Stadium.

The Premiership may have eluded them, but the FA Cup remains very much Arsenal's exclusive domain with their ninth triumph.

Indeed, for a side who supposedly do not take the competition too seriously, back-to-back triumphs in their third consecutive FA Cup final tell their own story rather more convincingly.

While Thierry Henry missed a catalogue of chances and was even booked for diving, Pires put the agony of last season's missed finale to the season well and truly behind him.

A year ago, the enigmatic Frenchman was nursing a serious knee injury as, despite having won the Footballer of the Year award, he missed out on the glory climax to the double-winning campaign.

This time he was the match-winner, striking the only goal of a rather scrappy encounter on 37 minutes to enable Arsenal to salvage one trophy from a season which had at one stage promised two.

Southampton certainly had heart and soul, but failed to match the impact of their exuberant and colourful supporters and ultimately lacked the class and composure of their experienced opponents.

With Ashley Cole clearing James Beattie's last-gasp header off the line, David Seaman, who also pulled off a sharp reaction save, was left to captain Arsenal to the trophy in what could be his last high-profile game for the club.

And so there was no repeat of the 1976 upset for the Saints, even though their surprise inclusion, 21-year-old Chris Baird, in only his second start, did himself proud.

The move was presumably a response to the 6-1 mauling at Highbury just 10 days earlier, when Baird went on as a first-half substitute for Fabrice Fernandes to provide extra defensive stability.

Arsenal nevertheless took up where they left off at Highbury, pulling Southampton's defence apart with ease, only for Henry to squander a hat-trick of chances in the opening 10 minutes.

While Baird and fellow full-back Wayne Bridge held their own, the central defensive duo of Claus Lundekvam and Michael Svensson were mesmerised by Henry's pace and movement.

With just 20 seconds gone, Lundekvam was left sprawling after his attempted tug on Henry failed to interrupt the striker's run and he was relieved that neither a goal, nor a penalty materialised.

Henry's finishing was similarly wayward when Antti Niemi denied him twice more, the second from an exquisite pass by Dennis Bergkamp, who also saw a cross-shot cleared off the line by Baird.

Then again, it was not as if Arsenal did not have their own defensive frailties, especially in the absence of Sol Campbell and Patrick Vieira.

However, Southampton's main threat came from long throw-ins, while Michael Svensson volleyed over the crossbar and Baird had the audacity to try to curl an effort past Seaman.

James Beattie did have the ball in the net but was offside and the game rather petered out amid a general lack of composure.

Arsenal still retained the edge, however, and Southampton wasted a plethora of chances to clear the ball as the breakthrough finally came.

Henry and Bergkamp were involved in the build-up before Fredrik Ljungberg's shot was blocked and Pires swooped to bury the loose ball past Niemi.

Only a minute later, the Frenchman, who seemed to be pushed by Baird, clipped another effort just over, while Bergkamp's shot was then blocked on the line.

Southampton were certainly up against it, especially as Arsenal found their rhythm after the break, with Gilberto dominating the midfield and Ljungberg and Henry again both going close.

Beattie may have flicked two headers wide, while Paul Telfer headed a corner over, but the more they pressed, the more dangerous Arsenal looked on the break.

Southampton's cause was not helped when Niemi, who had produced another fine save from Henry, went off after injuring his calf taking a free-kick.

Paul Jones replaced him and was soon joined by Jo Tessem, who squandered an opening within a minute of his arrival.

Brett Ormerod was denied by an instinctive reaction save from Seaman, while Jones also managed to deny Henry, who simply cannot score in an FA Cup final.

In four minutes of added time, there was one moment of real drama as Cole cleared Beattie's header off the line.

Arsenal were home and dry. The hoped-for double had become a single, but the FA Cup was once again back in the Highbury trophy cabinet.

ARSENAL1

Pires 38'

SOUTHAMPTON0

Venue: Millennium Stadium Cardiff

Crowd: 73,726

Referee: G Barber

Teams

ARSENAL: Seaman, Lauren, Keown, Luzhny, Cole, Pires, Parlour, Silva, Ljungberg, Henry, Bergkamp (Wiltord 77).

Subs Not Used: Taylor, Kanu, Toure, van Bronckhorst.

Booked: Keown, Henry.

SOUTHAMPTON: Niemi (Jones 66), Baird (Fernandes 86), Lundekvam, Michael Svensson, Bridge, Telfer, Oakley, Anders Svensson (Tessem 75), Marsden, Ormerod, Beattie.

Subs Not Used: Williams, Higginbotham.

Booked: Beattie, Telfer, Marsden, Michael Svensson.

ITALIAN SERIE A

ITALIAN AFFAIR

By Joe Russo

Juventus have won their 27th League title (Scudetto). After their recent 2-2 draw against Perugia, Juventus walked away with the title but then again this is nothing new for the great club. They were one of the favourites at the start of the season and they lived up to all expectations.

A Juventus Scudetto is almost as certain in Italy as saying that the sun will rise in the morning. Their record makes them the greatest club in Italy and perhaps, with only Real Madrid and Man Utd as genuine competition, the greatest in the world.

For their coach Marcello Lippi it was his fifth Scudetto with Juventus and, like the true professional that he is, he said that his team would not be having any big celebration because they were going to focus on the return semi final in the Champions League with Real Madrid which they duly won 3-1.

Juventus are indeed an amazing team and it will take a very focused AC Milan to beat them in Manchester in the Champions League final.

They are the greatest example in Italy of how a club should be run. Their rivals are simply pretenders to Juventus's throne. They are the greatest both on and off the field.

Let's take a brief look at their rivals. Inter are simply big spenders but with very little to show for all the money they have spent. Their last Scudetto was in 1989 and this is despite purchasing every big name player possible in the last decade or so.

AC Milan are the second best team in Italy. However, they have never really gotten over the late 1980's and early 1990's when they dominated world football.

AC Milan then had the three Dutchmen, Ruud Gullit, Marco Van Basten and Frank Rijkaard, a young Paolo Maldini and the legendary Franco Baresi in defence.

Arrigo Sacchi, followed by Fabio Capello, were at the helm when they were both at the peak of their coaching careers. AC Milan was by far the best club team in the world but have never been the same since. Should they beat Juventus in Manchester it could be the start of their revival.

We have also seen flashes of brilliance from Lazio and Roma, who have been won Scudettos in recent years, but their consistency has always been in question.

Lazio in particular have imploded with poor financial management and Roma have a president, Franco Sensi, who seems to have a loose connection between his brain and his mouth.

The Juventus version of 2002/03 didn't appear on paper to be far superior to say Inter or AC Milan. Sure there was Pavel Nedved, Gianluigi Buffon, Alex Del Piero, David Trezeguet, Lilian Thuram and Gianluca Zambrotta to name a few but their rivals from Milan also had formidable squads.

Birindelli, Zalayeta, Pessotto, Iuliano, Di Vaio, Tudor and Ferrara make up the balance of Juve's team but these are good honest players rather than real superstars of the game.

Sure you can argue that perhaps the likes of say Parma, Bologna, Chievo and Udinese would love to have these players on their books but, nevertheless, on paper at least, it is far short of Real Madrid's talent pool and about the equivalent of the Milan teams.

So why did Juve take out another Scudetto and Inter and AC Milan fall short? Because Juventus is a team where the players gel really well. The synergy at Juve is far superior to say Inter or AC Milan.

When the players pull on that black and white striped shirt they want to go that extra little bit. It is the sum of these extra little bits that makes Juve the overall team that it is.

There are those who will say that the referees are favouring Juventus but there is no foundation in that argument. It is simply tabloid Italian journalism at its best.

Sure penalties will be given to Juve and their opponents will be denied penalties but that is simply the nature of football. On other occasions Juve too will be denied penalties. Referees are humans and mistakes will always be made.

Juventus, through their own brilliance, create far more chances in the opposition goal area and therefore will receive more penalties than others.

Last Wednesday night in Turin the real final of the Champions League was probably played. Real Madrid, who in recent years have been the undisputed kings of Europe, were dethroned by Juventus.

A bold prediction is for Juventus to also win the Champions League and make it a Champions League-Scudetto double and the Grand Old Lady of Italian football can take another well deserved bow.

PARMA3
PIACENZA2

Adrian Mutu scored a priceless late winner for Parma, whose 3-2 victory on Saturday condemned Piacenza to Serie B football and kept their own campaign for European football on track.

It completed a remarkable comeback against Piacenza, who had raised their survival hopes by rushing into a 2-0 lead.

Enzo Maresca scored the first goal after 33 minutes and six minutes later prolific veteran Dario Hubner made it 2-0 for the visitors.

However, in the second half Alberto Gilardino pulled one back for Parma and then prolific Brazilian Adriano levelled it at 2-2 for the hosts.

And then Romanian Mutu struck with two minutes remaining to banish any lingering hopes of an escape for the visitors.

LAZIO3
BRESCIA1

Champions League issues were resolved for Lazio, with the Romans heading for Europe's top table thanks to a 3-1 win over Brescia.

Brescia striker Roberto Baggio gave the away team the lead but it was Lazio defender Sinisa Mihajlovic's penalty that equalised for the home side.

Brazilian defender Cesar and Argentina striker Claudio Lopez were then on target to give the Biancocelesti a crucial victory.

Lazio coach Roberto Mancini, linked with the job at Inter Milan next season, told RAI TV after the match that it was 100% certain he would stick with his present club.

CHIEVO0
ROMA0

Chievo will not play in next season's Champions League following a goalless draw against Fabio Capello's Roma at the Marc Antonio Bentegodi stadium.

Rivals Roma missed their absent captain Francesco Totti as they failed to claim three points that would have kept them just two points adrift of sixth placed Parma and seventh placed Udinese.

Luigi Del Neri's side were unlucky not to take a win but their attacking line did not have their day.

AC MILAN3
BOLOGNA1

AC Milan, having sealed their place in this year's Champions League final four days ago, made sure they are in the elite competition next season with a solid 3-1 victory over mid-table Bologna.

They took the lead in the first half through Andrea Pirlo's penalty, and doubled their advantage just after the break when Clarence Seedorf found the target.



Marco Materazzi (left) of Inter Milan rises above Modena's Giuseppe Colucci.



Juventus players David Trezeguet (left) and Antonio Conte celebrate winning the Serie A title.

Filippo Inzaghi then put Milan three up, and although Bologna struck back quickly through Mourad Meghni, a comeback was beyond them.

MODENA0
INTER MILAN2

Inter Milan bounced back from a dreadful week to secure a 2-0 win that leaves Modena worrying for their Serie A future.

Inter, who conceded the domestic title to Juventus last week and were eliminated from the Champions League by AC Milan on Tuesday, took control of the match with two first-half goals.

Modena defender Simone Pavan turned the ball into his own net after 28 minutes and then eight minutes later Sierra-Leone-born forward Mohamed Kallon made it 2-0.

Inter thus tighten their grip on the second place that would ensure an automatic place in the Champions League, while results elsewhere mean Modena now must be concerned about their future in the top flight.

Modena have 37 points - two better than Reggina who are currently in the final relegation place.

PERUGIA0
UDINESE2

Udinese had to wait until late in the second half to secure a 2-0 victory over Perugia that keeps their European ambitions on track.

Czech international Marek Jankulovski struck the crucial first goal for Udinese with 15 minutes remaining, and three minutes from time Dane Martin Jorgensen made the points secure for the northerners, who have been one of the surprise packages of the season in Italy.

TORINO1
EMPOLI1

In the lower reaches of Serie A, Empoli secured their top flight status after earning a point against already-relegated Torino.

Italy international striker Antonio Di Natale put Empoli ahead after 67 minutes and they looked to be heading for three points.

The Tuscans, five points clear of the drop zone in 11th heading into the fixture, did not have to face a hostile home crowd as Torino were still forced to play their home matches in Reggio Emilia following their ban from the Stadio Delle Alpi.

But Massimo Donati struck a late equaliser four minutes from time to deny Empoli the win, but it mattered little as the visitors are guaranteed Serie A football next season.

ATALANTA2
COMO1

Cristiano Doni was the hero for relegation-threatened Atalanta as they completed a remarkable comeback to beat Como 2-1.

The visitors, already relegated, took the lead when Nicola Caccio scored after 17 minutes, and things got worse for Atalanta when Daniele Berretta was sent off on the stroke of half-time for serious foul play.

After the break it was a different story as Doni first levelled from the penalty spot before snatching

the winner nine minutes from time. The win keeps Atalanta out of the drop zone, but their fight for survival will go down to the last day because

REGGINA2
JUVENTUS1

Reggina also won, 2-1, against already-crowned champions Juventus. David Di Michele put Reggina ahead in the 18th minute, but despite a leveller from Juve striker Marcelo Zalayeta soon afterwards, a second half strike from Emiliano Bonazzoli clinched three vital points for Reggina.

Juventus rested several players after their Champions League semi-final win over Real Madrid but coach Marcello Lippi denied it made any difference to the result.

Reggina are still in the drop zone but still level on 35 points with fellow strugglers Atalanta and Modena are just two points ahead with one match to play and there could be a play-off to settle the matter if two teams finish level on points.

FINAL FIXTURES

MAY 25, 2003

ROMA	v	ATALANTA
JUVENTUS	v	CHIEVO
UDINESE	v	LAZIO
PIACENZA	v	MILAN
BRESCIA	v	MODENA
EMPOLI	v	PARMA
INTER	v	PERUGIA
BOLOGNA	v	REGGINA
COMO	v	TORINO

AC Milan 3 Bologna 1, Atalanta 2 Como 1, Chievo 0 AS Roma 0, Lazio 3 Brescia 1, Modena 0 Inter Milan 2, Parma 3 Piacenza 2, Perugia 0 Udinese 2, Reggina 2 Juventus 1, Torino 1 Empoli 1.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Juventus	33	20	9	4	60	26	69
Inter Milan	33	19	7	7	62	36	64
AC Milan	33	18	7	8	53	26	61
Lazio	33	15	15	3	56	30	60
Chievo	33	16	7	10	48	35	55
Parma	33	14	11	8	53	36	53
Udinese	33	15	8	10	36	34	53
Roma	33	13	10	10	54	44	49
Brescia	33	9	14	10	34	36	41
Bologna	33	10	11	12	39	45	41
Perugia	33	10	11	12	38	46	41
Empoli	33	9	11	13	36	44	38
Modena	33	9	10	14	28	46	37
Atalanta	33	7	14	12	33	46	35
Reggina	33	9	8	16	36	53	35
Piacenza	33	7	6	20	40	60	27
Como	33	3	12	18	28	57	21
Torino	33	4	9	20	23	57	21

UEFA Champions League

Semi-finals 2nd leg

Juventus 3
12' Trezeguet
43' Del Piero
73' Nedved

Real Madrid 1
89' Zidane

(Aggregate: 4-3)

Juventus will meet AC Milan in the Champions League final at Old Trafford following a 3-1 victory over defending champions Real Madrid at the Stadio Delle Alpi.

The win gave the recently-crowned Italian champions a 4-3 aggregate win over the Spanish giants. David Trezeguet (12), Alessandro Del Piero (42) and Pavel Nedved (73) scored for Juventus while former Bianconeri ace Zinedine Zidane grabbed an 89th minute goal for Real.

Inter Milan 1
84' Martins Obafemi

AC Milan 1
45+ Shevchenko

(Aggregate: 1-1)

AC Milan held off a furious late onslaught from city rivals Inter at the San Siro to go through on away goals to the final of the Champions League to be staged in Manchester later this month.

After last week's dour 0-0 first-leg draw when AC Milan were technically 'at home' at the stadium shared by both clubs they took full advantage of their unaccustomed role of visitors when forward Andriy Shevchenko net-

ted in first-half injury time.

That goal left Inter needing to win the game outright to progress to the final.

Inter's teenage substitute Obafemi Martins levelled the score after 83 minutes to set up a grandstand finish but Rossoneri goalkeeper Christian Abbiati kept his side afloat with fine saves from another substitute Mohamed Kallon and then Ivan Cordoba.

* Juventus will meet AC Milan in the final on May 28 at Old Trafford.

Scottish Premier League

Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Rangers	37	30	4	3	95	27	94
Celtic	37	30	4	3	94	26	94
Hearts	37	17	9	11	56	51	60
Kilmarnock	37	16	9	12	47	52	57
Dunfermline	37	13	7	17	53	65	46
Dundee	37	10	14	13	50	59	44
Hibernian	37	15	6	16	54	61	51
Aberdeen	37	12	10	15	39	54	46
Livingston	37	9	8	20	46	56	35
Partick	37	7	11	19	34	56	32
Dundee Utd	37	7	11	19	35	66	32
Motherwell	37	6	7	24	39	69	25

Spanish Primera Liga

Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Real Sociedad	34	20	9	5	63	41	69
Real Madrid	34	19	11	4	76	39	68
D Coruna	34	20	6	8	60	38	66
Valencia	34	16	8	10	50	29	56
Celta Vigo	34	15	9	10	38	31	54
Athletic Bilbao	34	13	9	12	56	54	48
Mallorca	34	13	8	13	45	51	47
Atletico Madrid	34	11	11	12	46	44	44
Sevilla	34	11	11	12	32	32	44
Barcelona	34	11	11	12	53	44	44
Real Betis	34	11	11	12	45	48	44
Malaga	34	10	13	11	40	42	43
Villarreal	34	11	10	13	38	43	43
Valladolid	34	11	8	15	32	35	41
Racing Santander	34	12	5	17	44	53	41
Espanyol	34	9	12	13	40	44	39
Osasuna	34	9	10	15	31	44	37
Recreativo Huelva	34	8	10	16	33	56	34
CD Alaves	34	8	10	16	34	59	34
Rayo Vallecano	34	7	8	19	30	59	29

French Ligue 1

Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Lyon	36	19	10	7	61	36	67
Monaco	36	18	10	8	59	30	64
Marseille	36	18	8	10	37	33	62
Bordeaux	36	17	9	10	54	35	60
Sochaux	36	16	12	8	42	28	60
Auxerre	36	16	10	10	34	28	58
Guingamp	36	17	5	14	52	44	56
Nice	36	13	15	8	37	28	54
PSG	36	14	11	11	47	34	53
Nantes	36	15	8	13	36	37	53
Lens	36	12	15	9	38	30	51
Bastia	36	12	10	14	38	44	46
Strasbourg	36	11	11	14	39	52	44
Montpellier	36	10	9	17	35	50	39
Lille	36	9	12	15	27	42	39
AC Ajaccio	36	9	11	16	29	47	38
Rennes	36	9	9	18	32	44	36
Sedan	36	9	9	18	38	53	36
Le Havre	36	9	8	19	24	43	35
Troyes	36	6	10	20	21	42	28

FRENCH CUP FINAL

Monaco	4
Sochaux	0

Belgian Eerstklasse

Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Club Brugge	32	25	4	3	96	33	79
Anderlecht	31	23	2	6	72	28	71
Lokeren	31	18	5	8	69	51	69
St-Truidense	31	16	7	8	63	44	55
Lierse	31	15	8	8	49	40	53
Genk	31	15	7	9	70	51	52
Standard Liege	31	14	8	9	52	36	50
Gent	31	15	2	14	48	52	47
Mons	31	13	4	14	45	44	43
Westerlo	31	12	3	16	38	45	39
Beveren	31	11	2	18	47	69	35
Excelsior Mouscron	31	9	5	17	40	69	32
Germinal	31	8	7	16	48	55	31
Antwerp	31	8	7	16	41	54	31
La Louviere	31	6	9	16	33	44	27
Charleroi	31	6	8	17	38	65	26
KV Mechelen	31	3	6	22	15	84	15
Lommel	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

German Bundesliga

Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Bayern Munich	33	23	6	4	70	24	75
Borussia Dortmund	33	15	12	6	50	26	57
VfB Stuttgart	33	16	8	9	51	39	56
Hamburg	33	14	11	8	44	36	53
Werder Bremen	33	16	4	13	50	46	52
Hertha Berlin	33	15	6	12	50	43	51
Schalke	33	11	13	9	45	40	46
Wolfsburg	33	13	7	13	39	40	46
1860 Munich	33	12	9	12	42	48	45
VfL Bochum	33	11	9	13	51	54	42
Hansa Rostock	33	11	8	14	35	39	41
FC Kaiserslautern	33	10	10	13	40	40	40
Hannover 96	33	11	7	15	46	57	40
Borussia M'gladbach	33	10	9	14	39	44	39
Bayer Leverkusen	33	10	7	16	46	56	37
Arminia Bielefeld	33	8	12	13	35	45	36
Nurnberg	33	8	6	19	33	59	30
Cottbus	33	7	8	18	33	63	29

Greek First Division

Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Olympiakos	29	20	7	2	70	20	67
Panathinaikos	29	21	4	4	47	18	67
AEK	29	20	5	4	70	27	65
PAOK	29	16	5	8	57	35	53
Panionios	29	15	8	6	33	21	53
Iraklis	29	15	4	10	43	35	49
Aris	29	14	6	9	35	33	48
OFI	29	12	8	9	39	32	44
Xanthi	29	8	11	10	30	28	35
Egaleo	29	7	9	13	27	43	40
Proodeftiki	29	7	8	14	24	37	29
Akratitos	29	7	5	17	32	59	26
Kallithea	29	5	8	16	27	46	23
Ionikos	29	4	9	16	19	42	21
Panahaiki	29	1	6	22	11	68	9
Giannina	29	5	7	17	22	42	-62

GREEK CUP FINAL

PAOK Salonika	1
Aris	0

Dutch Eredivisie

Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
PSV	32	25	5	2	85	20	80
Ajax	32	24	5	3	91	31	77
Feyenoord	32	24	4	4	85	37	76
Roda JC	32	13	8	11	56	51	47
NEC	32	13	8	11	40	40	47
NAC	32	11	13	8	36	30	46
RKC	32	14	4	14	44	49	46
Heerenveen	32	12	8	12	55	52	44
FC Utrecht	32	11	11	10	46	45	44
Willem II	32	11	8	13	47	48	41
FC Twente	32	10	11	11	33	40	41
AZ	32	11	8	13	46	64	41
RBC	32	10	6	16	32	46	36
FC Groningen	32	7	10	15	28	43	31
Vitesse	32	7	8	17	31	47	29
FC Zwolle	32	7	7	18	29	61	28
Excelsior	32	5	7	20	33	64	22
De Graafschap	32	5	5	22	33	82	20

Johnny Warren Tribute Dinner



Images By Carlos Furtado